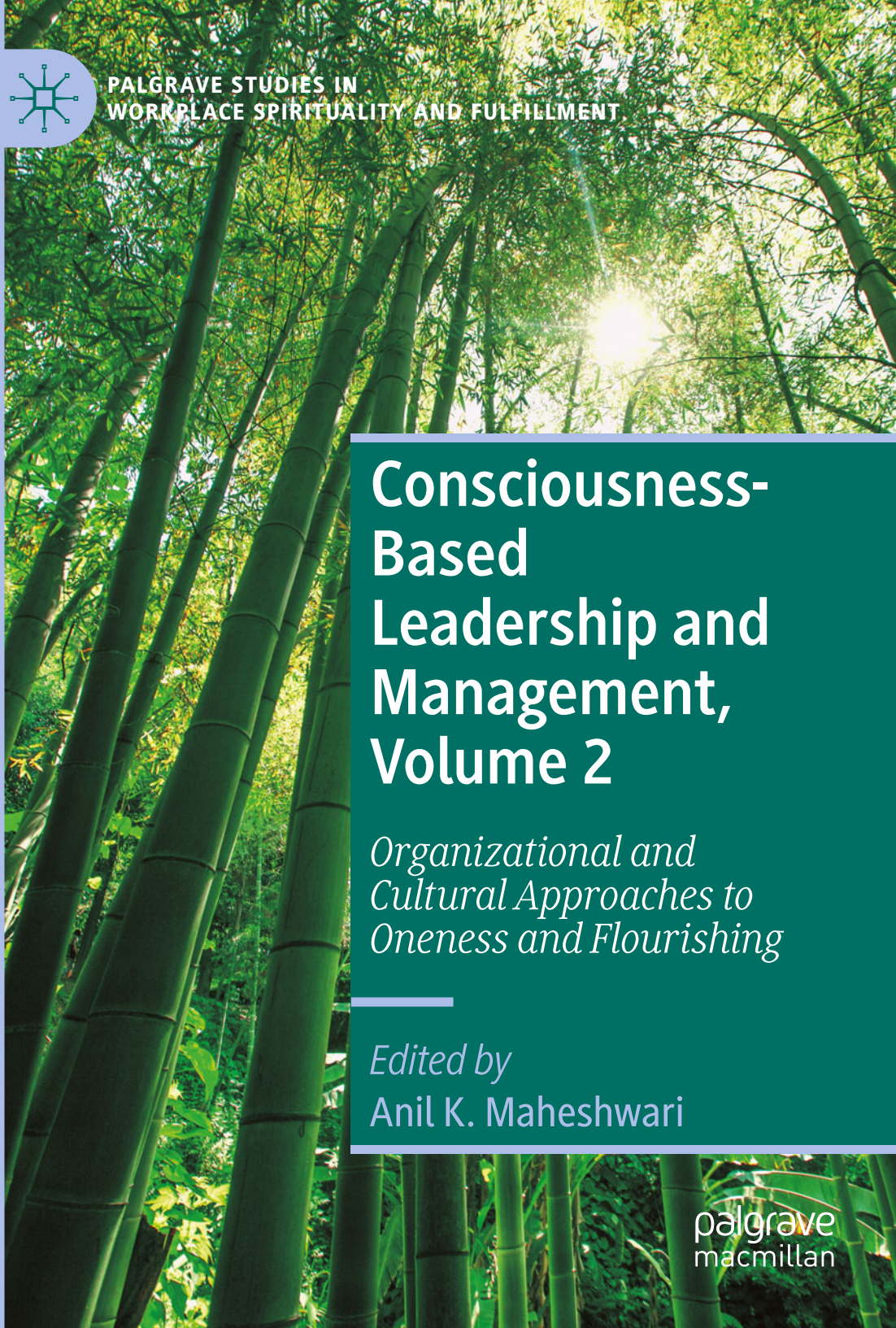

PALGRAVE STUDIES IN
WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND FULFILLMENT
Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2
Organizational and Cultural Approaches to Oneness and Flourishing
Edited by
Anil K. Maheshwari
palgrave
macmillan

Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment

Satinder Dhiman, *Editor-in-Chief*
Gary Roberts and Joanna Crossman, *Associate Editors*

By way of primary go-to-platform, this Series precisely maps the terrain of the twin fields of *Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment* in the disciplines of business, psychology, health care, education, and various other allied fields. It reclaims the sacredness of work—work that is mind-enriching, heart-fulfilling, soul-satisfying and financially-rewarding. It fills the gap in scholarship in the allied disciplines of Workplace Spirituality and Flourishing. Using a comprehensive schema, it invites contributions from foremost scholars and practitioners that reflect insightful research, practices, and latest trends on the theme of workplace spirituality and fulfillment. The uniqueness of this *Series* lies in its anchorage in the moral and spiritual dimension of various positive forms of leadership—such as Authentic Leadership, Servant Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Values-Based Leadership.

We welcome research monographs and multi-authored edited volumes representing myriad thought-positions on topics such as: Past, Present and Future Directions in Workplace Spirituality; Workplace Spirituality and World Wisdom/Spiritual Traditions; Culture Studies and Workplace Spirituality; Spiritual, Social and Emotional intelligence; Nature of Work; Mindfulness at Work; Personal Fulfillment and Workplace Flourishing; Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance; Inner Identity, Interconnectedness, Community and Transcendence; Managing Spiritual and Religious Diversity at Work; Spirituality and World Peace Imperative; Sustainability and Spirituality; Spirituality and Creativity; and Applied Workplace Spirituality in Health Care, Education, Faith-based Organizations, et al.

Anil K. Maheshwari
Editor

Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2

Organizational and Cultural Approaches to Oneness and Flourishing

palgrave
macmillan

Editor
Anil K. Maheshwari
Maharishi International University
Fairfield, IA, USA

ISSN 2662-3668 ISSN 2662-3676 (electronic)
Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment
ISBN 978-3-031-05838-7 ISBN 978-3-031-05839-4 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Dedicated to

Our parents and teachers

To whom we owe the greatest gratitude

Foreword

Responsibility Toward Oneself to Be Inclusive and Innovative

The nature of our Consciousness may define the realm of responsibility we feel, we have for ourselves and the world around us. Consciousness is not just the state of being aware, but it also includes the embedded meta rules that guide the subconscious decision-making (Maheshwari, 2021). My intuition is shaped by my repeated use of certain heuristics. These may be based not just on my current moral frame of beliefs and actions but also on how I wish these frames to be in future. King and Carruthers (2022) perhaps miss the connections between the roots of unconscious decisions, learned habits, or our toolbox of heuristics, and thus the consideration of responsibility toward oneself. In practicing even a limited sense of ethicality, my deep self-view would be a more forceful and more automatic influence than self-interest on decision-making (Chugh & Kern, 2016). We are a product of multiple contradictions in our beliefs, actions and norms of evaluating their impact on the world. May we ask, which part of the world? Our consciousness about the sentient and non-sentient world does not remain constant. It changes and what is more important is, we can change it.

During learning walks in different parts of India, called as *Shodhyatra*, we have tried to learn from four teachers: a teacher within, among peers, nature, and among common people. Every one of these teachers sharpens

our consciousness and expands the boundary of our responsibility toward us and our world. But when we define our self, our peers, nature, and communities narrowly from which we wish to learn, we begin to notice a wider tension between what we are and what we want to be. In summer we walk in hot places and in winter we walk in cold places with any learner who wishes to join us. We also walk in the Himalayas with self-selected students from IIMA, the top management education institution in India, who wishes to learn from the creativity, innovations, and outstanding traditional knowledge at the grassroots. After walking around 6000 km over the last 25 years, we continue to get surprised by the generosity of people we meet, many times only once and then never to return (except to share the report of learnings and a set of photographs taken on the way). SRISTI anchors the *Shodhyatra* and GIAN supports it on behalf of the Honey Bee Network. Individuals from farming and non-farming sector, corporations, academia, NGOs, students, entrepreneurs, and sometimes policy makers join *Shodhyatras* voluntarily.

How can such communities be so kind to strangers like us? How can asymmetrical expectations of responsiveness tie us in a transitory relationship with strangers? How does our consciousness get fertilized and how does it cross pollinate the consciousness of others around us? How does this expanded consciousness trigger creativity and innovation, overcome inertia, and empower our agency? The paradoxical nature of our feelings for the world out there and sense of responsibility toward oneself cannot be fully met by fuzzy expectations. Studies show time and again that when given freedom to make decisions, most people shirk from using that freedom fully (Haesevoets et al., 2019).

Autonomy is freedom to make decisions, and agency is willingness or capacity to use that freedom. Organizational leaders forget that autonomy automatically does not lead to agency. How do we empower people to leverage their agency? We can do it only by expanding people's realm of consciousness so that they may feel responsible to their real inclusive selves (Maheshwari, 2021); when they are able to realize that "no action" is also an action, as *Bhagavad Gita* teaches us well (Krishnan et al., 2023).

It is not just agency but a positive agency that needs to be strengthened for enabling most of us to use our decision-making power in favor of creative, compassionate, and collaborative people at the grassroots (Gupta, 2006; Quinn, 2015). Acting on our decisions by itself does not empower us fully. Our consciousness is inadequate when we don't feel within us the pain of others. Mahatma Gandhi said, when in doubt, recall

the face of the poorest person you have met and evaluate how your action is going to impact her/him (also see Maheshwari, 2023a). In the wake of climate change, we might add—look also at the last molten glacier, drying river, or eroded hill tops or drinking water well with declining water table before you take the decision. Such an expanded consciousness can drive our lives in the direction where we *need* to take action, not just where we *want* to take action.

If we take something from someone without her consent, or awareness of true value of that thing, then it would be unethical. Such an exercise of agency would be a negative use of autonomy. When ethnobotanists and ethnozoologists documented the crucial functional technical knowledge of people, they made the people anonymous and became the authors themselves. This way they not only exploited the local communities but also created an institutional superstructure which celebrated and perpetuated this exploitation. The Honey Bee Network was created 35 years ago to correct this asymmetry between formal and informal sectors and knowledge systems (Dey & Gupta, 2022; Gupta, 2006, 2010, 2016; Gupta et al., 2019). Other organizations and institutions such as SRISTI, GIAN, and NIF were set up in 1993, 1997, and 2000, respectively, to expand this vision of expanding options for grassroots creative communities and individuals in an ethical, responsible, and accountable manner.

This book embodies one of the widest possible interpretations of the notion of *samvedana*. The word *sam* signifies equal and *vedana* is pain, when we feel pain of others as intensely as they feel it, it does not remain theirs: it becomes ours. When we try to overcome our pain in a *srijansheel* (creative and innovative way) for *swantayh sukhay*, for one's own happiness, then responsibility toward one's own consciousness manifest most eloquently. Our nature within cannot be separated from nature outside. The authentic prayers always include a wish for the well-being of all living beings (*sarve bhavantu sukhinah*), and not only for humans, but for keeping the habitats of the animals, squirrels, birds, birds, and the others, happy and healthy. Why don't we design bird feeding platforms or shelters for stray dogs while designing modern cities, office complexes and habitats? We can reconceive our consciousness to include the well-being of the oceans, air, water, and the rest of the earth. Eventually our consciousness will have to initiate action toward circular economy (Maheshwari et al., 2022). Waste will need to be managed much more responsibly, as if the earth mattered. The culture of repairing our shirts, shoes, and gadgets

will need to come back. Repaired and reconditioned goods and services will need to become a way of life not just for the poor but also for the rich.

Wider, richer, and deeper consciousness is fuller consciousness. It fosters creativity and innovation to push our civilization to the newer heights of responsibility toward oneself. Anil Maheshwari (2023b) captures the essence of this book in Chapter 4, when he observes that "developed consciousness may lead to a greater sense of responsibility and ethical considerations in the management of emerging technologies" (p. xxx). This is the point, I feel, that will help us resolve many paradoxes of emerging modernity and take us toward an alternative evolutionary path that will be full of creativity, compassion, and collaboration. I have facilitated and witnessed during the last four decades, how the majority of the grassroots innovators share their creativity openly with the rest of the communities. Should they remain poor because they are generous, I ask? It may be a poignant moment to re-examine our deeply held assumptions, instincts, and habits, through expansion of our consciousness (Grant, 2021; Maheshwari, 2021). Let us embark upon a course correction in the capitalistic journey; and encourage and empower more people at all levels to care, share, and dare, in the pursuit of a larger and equitable, social, and environmental good.

Dr. Anil K. Gupta
Founder, Honey Bee Network,
SRISTI, GIAN & NIF
Visiting Faculty, IIMA & IITB,
Academy Professor, ACSIR
CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow 2018–21
Ahmedabad, India

References

Chugh, D., & Kern, M. C. (2016). A dynamic and cyclical model of bounded ethicality. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *36*, 85–100.

Dey, A., & Gupta, A. (2022). Grassroots innovation-based sustainable livelihoods: Role of intermediaries. In *Designing social innovation for sustainable livelihoods* (pp. 151–165). Springer Nature Singapore.

Grant, A. (2021). *Think again: The power of knowing what you don't know*. Penguin.

Gupta, A. K. (2006). From sink to source: The honey bee network documents indigenous knowledge and innovations in India. *Innovations Technology Governance Globalization, 1*(3), 49–66. 10.1162/itgg.2006.1.3.49

Gupta, A. K. (2010). Indigenous knowledge: Ways of knowing, feeling and doing. *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization: Science and the Public*, *15*(Part 2), 165–182.

Gupta, A. K. (2016). *Grassroots innovations: Minds on the margin are not marginal minds*. Penguin Random House.

Gupta, A., Dey, A., & Singh, G. (2017). Connecting corporations and communities: Towards a theory of social inclusive open innovation. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, *3*(1). 17. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40852-017-0062-3

Gupta, A., Shinde, C., Dey, A., Patel, R., Patel, C., Kumar, V., & Patel, M. (2019). *Honey Bee network in Africa: Co-creating a grassroots innovation ecosystem in Africa*. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11811/9629

Haesevoets, T., Folmer, C. R., & Van Hiel, A. (2019). The dark side of freedom: A systematic review and meta-analysis on the impact of choice on well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 20*(6), 1679–1710.

King, M., & Carruthers, P. (2022). Responsibility and consciousness. In *Oxford handbook on moral responsibility* (pp. 448–467). Oxford University Press.

Krishnan, R., Jain, R., & Maheshwari, A. K. (2023, this volume). Development of consciousness-based leadership from Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 21). Palgrave Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, *18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023a). Quantum leadership through Yoga Sutras. In *Consciousness-based leadership and management, volume 1: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (pp. 45–76). Springer International Publishing.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023b, this volume). Horizons of consciousness for emerging opportunities management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 2). Palgrave Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K., Bachani, J., & Gehani, R. R. (2022). Circular organizing for fuller engagement and sustainability. In *Responsible leadership for sustainability in uncertain times: Social, economic and environmental challenges for sustainable organizations* (pp. 91–104). Springer Nature Singapore.

Quinn, R. E. (2015). *The positive organization: Breaking free from conventional cultures, constraints, and beliefs*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Dr. Anil K. Gupta is an Indian scholar in the area of grassroots innovations. He is the founder of the Honey Bee Network. He retired as a professor from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA) in 2017. He held an executive vice-chair position at the National Innovation Foundation, where he is a member of its governing board now. He is also a fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2004 for his contributions to management education. He is known for crafting innovative courses for students at the IIMA. One of his most popular courses included *shodh yatra* (meaning "research walk"), under which he took management students to different parts of the country to learn from local communities and study their knowledge systems. This course was derived from his larger concept of walking through the length and breadth of the country, interacting with farmers, traditional knowledge holders, grassroots innovators, innovative students, etc.

Preface

Modern business organization as a legal entity emerged about 400 years ago to pool resources and accomplish large projects which could not be accomplished by any one person or a small group. Cultures have been evolving for millennia as ways of living from the development of wisdom and knowledge toward collaborative work. Ancient cultures were based on a consciousness of oneness with the earth and nature. Modern organizations are primarily instrumental entities for technological progress and a march toward material abundance. Both cultures and organizations are integrative entities based on certain core principles and practices. We suggest that a consciousness-based approach to organizations and cultures is based on three main principles: (1) Paradigm (Consciousness is primary), (2) Interpersonal (love, empathy, and compassion), and (3) Individual (experiencing unboundedness and creativity).

This second volume brings a consciousness-based approach to the functioning of modern organizations toward eudaimonic well-being of humanity. It is an act of synthesis of the natural and the human-made laws toward a more perfect union for peace and flourishing. It includes contributions from leaders as well as promising researchers in the field of consciousness and workplace spirituality from around the world, many of whom participated in the international conference on consciousness-based leadership and management that we organized in 2021.

I wish to thank all the contributors for their painstaking work in developing their approaches and working with us on this volume. I wish to

thank my family for their support and patience around the entire two-volume project. Nupur Maheshwari, in particular, was helpful in editing some of my chapters to sharpen their message. I wish to thank my parents and teachers and colleagues for encouraging this work. Our gratitude to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for making accessible the knowledge of consciousness and the practices for development toward higher states. May your organization be fun and successful, and lead to a blissful and peaceful world.

Fairfield, Iowa
April 2023

Anil K. Maheshwari

Praise for *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*

"In both theory and practice there is a bias in the conceptualization of leadership, it is a focus on behavior. The key to elevating leadership is in understanding the concept of consciousness. These volumes are an invaluable contribution."

—Professor Robert E. Quinn, *Center for Positive Leadership, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, USA*

"These volumes provide a refreshingly new and concise consciousness-based framework for management as a source of world benefit. They are a much-needed resource to build emphasis on consciousness as the basis for action, in business and elsewhere."

—Chris Laszlo, *Professor of Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, USA*

"This 2-volume book is a unique and thought-provoking consideration of how the experience and understanding of consciousness can bring peace and prosperity to the world. It contains contributions from dozens of authors from around the world, who amplify the theory and practice of consciousness from a variety of traditions. It aims to enrich leaders and managers with powerful perspectives and tools.

It shows how development of consciousness can be the source of fluid thinking, and how it fosters higher purpose, both for individuals and for their organizations. It demonstrates how creating safe reflective spaces

and developing a sense of oneness can help manage the challenges in today's volatile world. The chapter on "Creating Coherence in Collective Consciousness" by Orme-Johnson discusses fascinating recent research on a novel method to create world peace.

"Consciousness as the Source of Purposeful Leadership" by Drs. Nader and Maheshwari offers fundamental ideas for growing leadership. Another chapter, "A Larger Lens" by Nader and others shows how the simple practice of Transcendental Meditation can reduce burnout and enhance learning for busy doctors in training.

I highly recommend this book for all leaders and managers. It will give them tools to align their organizations with the underlying rising collective consciousness in the world."

—Bob Roth, *CEO, David Lynch Foundation; NY Times bestselling author, Strength in Stillness: The Power of Transcendental Meditation*

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Dr. Duysal Askun Celik, PhD is a Professor of Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Industrial/Organizational Psychology and currently teaches at Baruch College, New York City College of Technology (CUNY) and Jones School of Business, Rice University. She also runs her own personal development platform called Group of Change (www.groupofchange.com) under her pen name as an author, Kayla Wholey. In 2017, she has written a self-help book on personal development entitled "Your First Step to Re-create your Life in Oneness: Awareness". She has been working in the areas of psychology, organizational behavior, and spirituality conducting research on the concept of Oneness, Consciousness, and Leadership. Dr. Askun Celik has also written and published papers and book chapters about Inclusive leadership and consciousness.

James B. Bray, MD, is currently a retired Obstetrician-Gynecologist. He received his medical education at Loyola Stritch School of Medicine and residency training in Chicago (Columbus Hospital under Northwestern University). He was in clinical practice in south suburban Chicago. His wife of 50 years also was a practicing physician, as are two of his five children. He has been practicing Transcendental Meditation since 1977 and was an initial promoter of the Physician Wellness Through Transcendental Meditation program.

Carla L. Brown EdD is Adjunct Professor of Medical Education at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine and co-director

for the Center for Leadership Performance. She is a Certified Teacher of the Transcendental Meditation technique and co-leads the 2-credit elective on Physician Wellness Through the Transcendental Meditation Technique. She received her EdD from Harvard University Graduate School of Education and has written on overcoming barriers to the use of promising research in the field of Sociology of Research Use.

Duncan H. Brown is Co-Director of the Center for Leadership Performance and instructor for the Elective course on Physician Wellness Through the Transcendental Meditation Technique at Loyola University Chicago, Stritch School of Medicine in Maywood, IL. He is a graduate of Maharishi International University (BA, Literature, and MA, Higher Education Administration). He qualified as a Certified Teacher of the Transcendental Meditation technique in 1976. He has been a Network Administrator, a newspaper reporter, and a magazine editor.

Richard J. Carroll, MD, MSc, FACC, is a board-certified internist and cardiologist. He has practiced medicine in multiple settings including academic medical centers, the VA system, corporate medical groups, private practice, as well as a solo practitioner. He trained at the University of Illinois, Loyola University, and Johns Hopkins University, and held academic appointments at both Loyola Stritch School of Medicine and Johns Hopkins. He also served as a regional vice president/chief medical officer for several nonprofit healthcare systems. He began practicing the TM technique in 1973 and became a teacher of Transcendental Meditation in 1978.

Dr. Larry Clay Jr is an Assistant Professor of Business at Marymount University - College of BILT (Business Innovation Leadership & Technology). He teaches strategy & entrepreneurship with emphases on flourishing, consciousness, and design thinking principles. Dr. Clay Jr also holds positions as business coach/program administrator for the Conscious Business Innerprise Change Agent Masterclass and as a mentor preparing business students for local technology-based firms in the TechSet Virginia program.

Gry Espedal is Associate Professor at VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway. Espedal received a PhD from VID within the field of organizational theory and values work. Espedal has published articles on a national and international level on institutionalizing of values work, the emergence of institutional logics within religious organization, and the

connection between stories, practice, values, and emotions, in a faith-based institution. Espedal is the editor and author of several books within fields such as understanding values work, researching values, and value-based leadership.

Dr. Alex Fong is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Hong Kong University Business School and the Chinese University of Hong Kong Business School. He teaches entrepreneurship, management, and strategy. He conducts research on entrepreneurship, leadership, governance, well-being, and sustainability in enterprises. Dr. Fong holds a PhD and a DBA, an MSc in Global Finance, an MTech in Global Logistics, and a BSocSc in Economics and Business Management. He is a Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Directors and a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, a member of the International Coaching Federation and a certified counselor of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association. As an entrepreneur, Dr. Fong is the owner of GREAlpha Electronics & GRE Manufacturing Limited. As a governance practitioner, Dr. Fong serves as Independent Non-Executive Director on the boards of Hutchison Port Holdings Limited, Tom Group Limited, Hong Kong Electric Investment Limited.

David H. Goodman, PhD, is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Maharishi International University, and a contributing faculty member at Walden University, serving as a dissertation mentor. He is also a certified teacher of Transcendental Meditation. He is interested in sustainable business and consciousness. He has taught a variety of subjects, including entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship project, leadership, creative and critical thinking in economics, management for sustainability, operations management, and marketing. He has taught in the USA, Norway, and China in person, and to South Africa and India through distance education. He is also a consultant in business strategy and business plan development. His dissertation was on Construction and Validation of an Instrument to Measure Flow and Job Satisfaction in Occupational Settings.

Dr. Gregory Gruener is a board-certified neurologist with subspecialty training in neurophysiology and neuromuscular disease, but currently serving in medical school administrative and educational roles. As the Ralph P. Leischner, Jr., MD Professor of Medical Education and the Vice Dean of Education, he has focused on a tripartite mission for the

Stritch School of Medicine of (i) the development of faculty into exemplary medical educators, (ii) design, model, and disseminate novel and innovative curricula, and (iii) to advance knowledge through the scholarly pursuit of measuring medical education outcomes and researching medical education techniques. The introduction of Transcendental Meditation as a medical student elective has helped to fulfill that mission as it addresses an immediate need for student wellness by setting a foundation for a healthy, long, and rewarding career as a physician.

Vikram Gulati has had a successful career managing various information technology businesses. He has been CEO of multiple IT services organizations. The smallest was a start-up operation of just a few people to teams as large as three thousand globally. He has mentored numerous start-ups and actively consults technology services and private equity firms in the area of strategy and value creation. He is an Engineer, MBA in education, and lives in Fairfield, IA, USA. Over the years of experience, he has built a particular interest in strategy, technology, and creating a culture of high-performance teams. His area of research is exploring the impact of leadership's consciousness development on organizational strategy and performance. He is pursuing a PhD in Management at Maharishi International University.

Professor Mohan Raj Gurubatham is from the Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Management Graduate School of Business (ELM) at Help University, Malaysia. He consulted at global firms such as Accenture in change management, e-branding, and learning. He was formerly a TC3 working member of the International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP), UNESCO evolving the best practice and research on technology and education. He obtained a BSc Honors degree in Psychology from Bolton University (UK), an MBA from Maharishi International University (MIU), MA in Communication research from the University of Leicester (UK), and a PhD in Learning Sciences and Organizational Behavior from the University of Iowa.

Dr. Dennis Heaton is Dean of the College of Business and Professor of Management at Maharishi International University, Fairfield, Iowa. He earned an EdD in Educational Leadership from Boston University. He has published extensive research on consciousness-based education and the unified theory of leadership. He is aligned with PRME's statement that

we need to develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value, for business and society.

Reetika Jain is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of management at FMS, University of Delhi, India. Her research involves studying the relation between mindfulness, self-control, and financial well-being of working professionals. She has obtained her graduation (BCom) and post-graduation (MCom) degree in commerce from the University of Delhi. Also, she holds a bachelor's in Education (BEd) from University of Delhi. Before working as research scholar, she was a visiting faculty in the University of Delhi, India. Her areas of interest are mindfulness, consciousness-based leadership, organizational behavior, behavioral finance, and finance. She has attended many national and international conferences and published her work in various journals.

Jeannel King loves to help people embrace their awesomeness and bring more of it to what they do in the world. A seasoned visual facilitator, entrepreneur, author, speaker, coach, and consultant, Jeannel applies creative-spiritual processes within traditional business contexts to help teams generate impressive business results. She holds degrees in psychology and nonprofit management and is currently finishing her PhD in psychology at Saybrook University. A Fetzer Scholar and recipient of the 2022 Academy of Management MSR Promising Dissertation Award, Jeannel's research explores the intersectionality of creativity, spirituality, and personal agency in service to organizational transformation. Jeannel lives in the USA with her cat and her life partner, and blogs at jeannelking.com.

Rajshekar Krishnan, PhD, is a Global Leadership Coach, Trainer, and Consultant. He is the Founder of Wayda Consultants, established in Bengaluru, India in 2018. His previous assignments were with leading multinational corporations viz., Union Carbide, IBM, EMC2 & CA as well as with Indian organizations like NIIT and Flipkart. He was awarded PhD in 2012 for his thesis on "A study of Personality traits, Spiritual Transcendence and Leadership Styles in India" by the Aligarh Muslim University. His research interests are Spirituality at the workplace; Indian Ethos for Leadership; Indian Psychology and Organisational Behaviour; Management and Leadership Development. He studied at Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Allahabad and was

awarded BE (Mechanical Engineering) in 1983. He has several research publications to his credit.

Christian Earl List is a doctoral candidate within the Human and Organizational Learning (HOL) department in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at The George Washington University. His dissertation research adopts a critical phenomenological approach toward exploring whiteness within the context of organizational antiracism commitments in 2020. Through his studies, Christian has found creative outlets in poetry as well as visual arts utilizing philosophy and conceptual frameworks from his research. Christian believes that through an antiracist praxis, one must engage in new orientations for necessary relational action. Collaborative autoethnography presents as one such method of engagement.

Ángel López Mutuberría is a Doctor of Business Administration (Case Western Reserve University), Master in Business Administration (University of Houston), and Master in Psychology (Universidad de Navarra) graduate in Law and Psychology. Angel has been acknowledged as pivotal to developing human potential and healthy organizations. Throughout 20+ years of experience, he has contributed to building successful human resource departments in different companies globally while coaching and mentoring executives and professionals worldwide. As an academic researcher, Angel is very passionate about human development and human flourishing from a multidimensional view of the human being, where consciousness and the true self play a pivotal role in life-meaning endeavors.

Beate Jelstad Løvaas is Professor at VID Specialized University in Oslo, Norway. She holds a PhD in Management and has a Master of Science degree from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and a European master's from University of Kiel, Germany. Her research interests include meaningful work, motivation, the role of group reflection processes, innovation, leadership, relations, values, and volunteering within the civil society sector and public sector. She has published in a variety of national and international journals and she is an editor of books within the field of values.

Dr. Anil K. Maheshwari is a scholar and seeker devoted to world peace, and whose interests transcend and include data science, management science, and Vedic science. Currently a Professor of management and

information systems at Maharishi International University (MIU), USA, he has published 16 books, 40 research papers, and book chapters, and has made over 40 conference presentations. He earned a BTech in Electrical Engineering from IIT Delhi, an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad, a PhD in Management from Case Western Reserve University, and an MA in Vedic Science from MIU. In 2021, he organized a unique *international conference on consciousness-based leadership and management*, which provided the impetus and basis for this two-volume book set. His book *Data Analytics Made Accessible* has been consistently ranked #1 book in this area by global universities, has been published by McGraw-Hill, and also translated into Chinese. He also worked for 20 years as an executive in the global IT industry, including 9 years at IBM.

Tony Nader, MD, PhD, is a medical doctor trained at Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (PhD in Brain and Cognitive Science). He studied ancient and modern techniques of self-development, is an expert in the science of Consciousness, and founder and editor in chief of the International Journal of Mathematics and Consciousness. He is the author of several books, including the bestseller, One Unbounded Ocean of Consciousness, and he leads the Transcendental Meditation organization globally. Dr. Nader has conducted and published research on neurochemistry, neuroendocrinology, and the relationship between diet, age, behavior, mood, seasonal influences, and neurotransmitter and hormonal activity, and on the role of neurotransmitter precursors in medicine. Dr. Nader has hosted podcasts with great thinkers, scientists, and medical doctors, and made presentations at a large number of academic institutions worldwide and has been a keynote speaker in international and governmental forums.

Indu K. Pereis is a Senior Lecturer at Open Polytechnic, New Zealand. Indu earned commerce and business administration degrees from Colombo University, Sri Lanka and held various positions for ten years in the corporate sector. He completed his PhD in international entrepreneurship in 2014 at Waikato University, New Zealand. His expertise is in entrepreneurship, international business, strategic management, and spirituality, and he actively researches and publishes in these areas. Indu is also a meditation teacher, and his mindfulness journey started in 2007, based on the teachings of the Theravadha Buddhist philosophy and J. Krishnamurti's work. After a decade of searching, reading, and practicing various techniques related to mindfulness/insight development,

Indu now shares his knowledge with others who wish to develop their knowledge about mindfulness, consciousness, and meditative practices.

Stuart Rothenberg, MD, is National Medical Director of the Transcendental Meditation Health Professionals Association and Chief Medical Officer of the David Lynch Foundation. A Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, he was a Pulitzer Scholar at Columbia College in New York and received his MD degree from New York University School of Medicine (1974). Dr. Rothenberg was one of the first physicians in the USA to be trained as a teacher of the Transcendental Meditation technique. He pioneered the development of integrative mind–body approaches to the prevention and treatment of chronic disorders that include Transcendental Meditation and Ayurvedic medicine. Dr. Rothenberg is co-author of several published studies documenting the effects of this program on chronic disorders and has presented these findings at leading medical schools and research centers both nationally and abroad. Dr. Rothenberg has headed up the "Heal the Healers Now" program, a national initiative which offers training in the TM-based Healthcare Provider Wellness Program to frontline healthcare workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

HaiYan Song, PhD, MBA, and MA, is an Assistant Professor at Maharishi International University, USA. She has over 18 years of teaching experience in the universities of China, Canada, and USA. Her fields of research interests and expertise include Sustainability Reporting and Creative Entrepreneurship. Her dissertation research focused on the Mediation Effect of Workplace Social Capital on the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement. She is a winner of the Fulbright Scholarship (TCLP Program) by the US State Department

Julia Storberg-Walker is Chair of the Human and Organizational Learning (HOL) Department in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at The George Washington University. Julia has developed multiple Collaborative Autoethnography (CAE) projects over the years and initiated this CAE with doctoral students in early 2021. Through her experience in this CAE, Julia has transformed as a scholar, learner, colleague, and leader. She believes that the intensity of the collective learning and inquiry space created by this CAE is remarkable, and it

sets the bar for future CAE projects. She aspires to include CAE experiences in doctoral education as a way to foster transformative learning and development.

Hermella G. Tekle is a doctoral candidate within the Human and Organizational Learning (HOL) department in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at The George Washington University. Her research is oriented toward organizational communication, change management, and adult learning and development. Hermella is an active member of the Academy of Management (AOM), in which she is a recipient of the Fetzer Scholarship and serves as the Associate Track Editor for the Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) 2023 conference. Hermella works with a diverse clientele in her practice to design and implement inclusive learning and development programs. Originally from Ethiopia, she holds a master's degree in Strategic Public Relations from George Washington University and an honors bachelor's degree in History and Political Studies from Colby-Sawyer College.

Dr. Frederick W. Travis received his PhD in Psychology at Maharishi International University in 1988. After a two-year post-doctoral position in basic sleep research at the University of California Davis, Dr. Travis returned to MIU as Director of the Center for Brain, Consciousness, and Cognition. His work has focused on brain development from birth to adulthood, effects of stress on brain functioning, effects of meditation on the brain during and after meditation practice (state and trait effects), subjective and objective markers of higher states of consciousness, brain patterns of peak performance and effects of other technologies from the Vedic tradition of India such as yoga asana practice, listening to Vedic recitation, and effects of the built environment on an individual. Fred has published 92 papers and book chapters, and has authored or co-authored four books. To contact Dr. Travis and for further information, please visit www.drfredtravis.com.

Rohana Ulluwishewa PhD is Director (Education and External Relations), Center for Spirituality in Sustainable Business Management, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. In his thirty years of academic career, he has worked as Associate Professor at University of Sri Jayewardenepura, as Senior Lecturer at the University of Brunei Darussalam, and was Visiting Fellow

at Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands, Leeds University in UK, Leiden University in the Netherlands, and Massey University in New Zealand. His research areas were sustainable development, gender issues in development, indigenous knowledge and sustainable development, and resources management and environment. For the last decade, the focus of his research and publications has been on spirituality and sustainability. While his first book on this subject ***Spirituality and Sustainable Development*** (Palgrave Macmillan, UK) was honored as a Finalist of the International Book Award 2014, the second book, ***Spirituality Demystified: Understanding Spirituality in Rational Terms*** won the AWCT awards (the highest prize annually awarded in New Zealand for books on Body, Mind and Spirit) in 2015.

Deyang Yu is a doctoral candidate within the Human and Organizational Learning (HOL) department in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at The George Washington University. He completed his bachelor's degree in Economics at University of Washington, and he earned his master's degree in Finance from Johns Hopkins University. Along with several years of experience in the financial services industry, he joined Guangzhou Futures Exchange to support the green economy and sustainable development.

List of Figures

List of Tables

PART I

Consciousness-Based Approaches to Organizational Oneness and Flourishing

CHAPTER 1

Wholeness of Organizational and Cultural Approaches to Oneness and Flourishing Using Ocean as a Metaphor

Anil K. Maheshwari

Introduction

Consciousness-based leadership and management (CBLM) can be defined as operating from higher states of consciousness, from being self-aware and inclusive, and raising the consciousness of those around us. Ideally, it will generate higher compassion, creativity, confidence, and adaptability to address the grand challenges facing humanity effortlessly and effectively. CBLM can be achieved by regularly and systematically transcending the surface reality and connecting with the unbounded consciousness that is the source of all the laws of nature. Ultimately, it could create a peaceful and flourishing world for all. The opening chapter of volume 1 (Maheshwari, 2023) presented and expounded on the three key principles of CBLM:

A. K. Maheshwari (✉)
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_1

1. Paradigm—Consciousness is primary. This principle includes the idea of complementary existence of opposites, and living in total harmony with nature.
2. Social/Interpersonal—Love is all we need. This principle includes the idea of interacting with empathy and compassion toward all life forms.
3. Individual—Unboundarize oneself. This principle includes freeing oneself from space–time containers, and developing openness and creativity.

In this chapter, we will provide a brief synopsis of all the chapters in this volume.

Organization of This Volume

This volume is devoted largely to organizational and cultural approaches to the development of oneness and flourishing. It is divided into two part. Each part offers a mix of qualitative and quantitative studies. The first part contains eight chapters focused on consciousness-based development of organizational capabilities such as ambidexterity, flow, freedom from burnout, and work-life balance. The second part contains eight chapters focused on more practical organizational interventions such as reinvention, meaning-making, well-being, and sustainability, and ocean as a metaphor for implementing CBLM.

Section I

In Chapter 2, Tony Nader, Richard Carroll, Fred Travis, James Bray, Gregory Gruener, Stuart Rothenberg, Duncan Brown, and Carla Brown discuss the role of technologies of consciousness in the evolution of medical education to freedom from stress, and anxiety. Burnout is a major problem in medical education, which leads to many consequences including lost productivity and even the loss of life. A major medical school in the midwestern USA decided to introduce the technology of development of consciousness. This chapter reports the results of an 8-year-long study of the experiences of medical students who opted to take an optional 2-credit course on Transcendental Meditation (TM). In a first of its kind study in medical education, the authors use grounded theory to assess the effects of this initiative. They report three major outcomes

from the data: First, students' most pressing need, stress and anxiety reduction, was addressed with the TM technique. Second, the students reported multiple positive outcomes affecting many facets of health and well-being. Third, with TM they gained more productive time each day, which improved relationships and teamwork. This shows that technologies of consciousness can help the domain of medical education evolve toward a more joyful experience.

In Chapter 3, David Goodman and Anil Maheshwari compare the notion of the flow experience, first studied by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1991), and the experience of Transcendence through Transcendental Meditation® brought to the world by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Flow represents a look into peak profound experiences, suggesting an altered state of consciousness often accompanied by superior creativity and accomplishment. The experience of Transcendence creates expansion of consciousness and leads to heightened creativity and peak experiences. This chapter compares and contrasts flow experience with the development of consciousness toward higher states. Regular practice of TM can help in getting firmly established in higher states of consciousness and may enable more frequent flow experiences. These are then related to the fundamentals of progress enumerated by Maharishi, which are stability, adaptability, purification, integration, and growth. The implications of leaders experiencing more flow through being established in higher states of consciousness are considered.

In Chapter 4, Vikram Gulati and Anil Maheshwari focus on the management of opposites, and empirically examine whether an experience of oneness facilitates the ability to handle conflicting priorities. Leaders in organizations and society have to balance conflicting priorities, such as whether to protect the population from Covid or keep the economy humming. Ambidexterity in individuals may be facilitated by developing a paradoxical mindset that can effectively consider opposite viewpoints without losing balance. This research tested if practice of meditation techniques was effective in facilitating the experience of oneness. Based on a survey of 143 working individuals, the analysis supported ($p < 0.01$) the proposition that meditation helped develop an experience of oneness, which helped create a belief in oneness, which then facilitated a paradoxical mindset, when in turn supported individual ambidexterity. East vs West culture of the respondent also had a strong direct effect on ambidexterity ($p < 0.001$). Western culture is known to have higher individualism and lower power distance index, and would be more amenable

to higher ambidexterity. This research has strong implications for developing ambidexterity in leaders through adoption of practices of oneness such as meditation.

In Chapter 5, Rajshekar Krishnan, Reetika Jain, and Anil Maheshwari develop a unified model for development of consciousness-based leadership based on common lessons from Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali Yoga Sutras. The chapter discusses the extant modes of developing leadership capacity through self-learning and formal training programs. The chapter highlights the Bhagavad Gita's views on the mindset and actions of a person whose consciousness has been raised. It explores Patanjali yoga sutras as a practical approach or process for raising human consciousness and living a peaceful and integrated life. The chapter concludes by creating a model showing required qualities in a consciousness-based leader that are common between Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali Yoga Sutras. The implications for a consciousness-based leadership are presented.

In Chapter 6, Mohan Raj Gurubatham expands the scope and approach of thinking and learning to focus on the fluidity of intelligence and development of wisdom. The author prioritizes the importance of inductive learning over crystallized learning. Applying crystallized lessons and theories from the past inappropriate to novel instances in a dynamically changing world can lead to mistakes. He presents a model called cognitive literacy value chain (CLVC). At one end is rote learning, and at the other end is inductive learning. At the culminative level of this chain, higher order thinking and greater wisdom is achieved. He further posits that regular practice of Transcendental Meditation enables higher order thinking, such as field independence, creativity, and more. The author also presents case studies of students from different cultures and their experiences in developing higher order thinking through TM. The implication for leaders is to adopt suitable practices of contemplation and meditation to help develop their higher order thinking for mistake free action.

In Chapter 7, Indu K. Pereis and Rohana Ulluwishewa focus on sustained development of work-life balance (WLB), and subjective well-being (SWB). They posit that by using a consciousness-based approach to SWB, it is possible to get a deeper understanding as to how temporal, emotional, and behavioral demands are constructed and the effect of cognitive biases in shaping our perceived situational awareness. They theorize that in order to achieve sustained WLB and SWB one must have the desire to achieve a higher state of consciousness as a part of their life goal. One must also understand the true nature of life events

(i.e. they are impermanent, transient, and conditioned). Finally, one should focus on minimizing the gap between their aspirations and situation and be content with what life offers. This will lead to maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life by improving the subjective well-being without overdependence of material well-being.

In Chapter 8, Alex Fong and Duysal Askun Celik examine the notion of developing oneness in today's business world from philosophical and psychological perspectives. From a philosophical perspective, the notion of Oneness acts as a point of confluence that bridges the Eastern and the Western world both as an idea and a practice. They identify the WEIRD (western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) and non-WEIRD paradigm perspectives, as distinct approaches to self that differ along the lines of individual needs, societal order, self-regulation, and moral codes. They suggest that the non-WEIRD approaches may be better at connoting an expansive version of the self that is congruent with the Oneness hypothesis. From a psychological perspective, Oneness concentrates on a feeling or consciousness which could be experienced and cultivated both "within" and "between," or as between parts and whole. They suggest that if consciousness could be developed as both an intrapersonal and interpersonal capacity, the possibilities of co-existence could be discovered. On a practical level, they suggest that many tools such as meditations, dialogs, and immersive technologies could be used to enhance our consciousness both within and between.

Section 2

Section 2 focuses on organizational interventions and practices.

In Chapter 9, Anil Maheshwari describes how different horizons of consciousness can be utilized for effective management of emerging opportunities. This is an important concern for organizations for managing fast-emerging technologies of information and communication. Organizational leaders can operate with multiple horizons of awareness to manage and evolve current businesses while keeping a soft holistic awareness of and investing in newer developments in the environment. The development of consciousness of leaders can aid in the management of emerging opportunities by allowing organizations to critically evaluate the potential impact of new technologies on society and the environment. Additionally, a developed consciousness may lead to a greater sense of responsibility and ethical considerations in the management of emerging

technologies. This chapter examines how to systematically develop the capability to spot and manage emerging technologies and opportunities. It presents a case study from IBM, of attempts at operating in a rapidly evolving technological space through different managing horizons of consciousness.

In Chapter 10 Beate Jelstad Løvaas and Gry Espedal consider the notion of organizational spaces, and the process for creating safe reflective spaces in organizational settings. In a *safe* space, group members "dare to share." They freely and openly share their stories and challenges, as well as present new ideas. Hence, such space is safe for interpersonal risk taking. Such an environment may allow for identification with others to foster individual growth and transformative learning. Collective reflection in safe spaces presents a unique opportunity for managers to bring the unspoken and unconscious to the forefront, thus creating a space for identifying values. Based on qualitative data from an educational management program wherein executive leaders from different work sectors reflected together in supervised settings, the authors report on the steps that enable a move toward an environment that we understand as a safe reflective space. Furthermore, they investigate how these safe reflective spaces allow changes in actions and practices, as well as foster development and growth among individual actors, and thus can be considered a feasible approach in promoting the flourishing of humanity.

In Chapter 11, Jeannel King reports on an ongoing action research study in facilitating organizational transition. The author addresses the challenge that companies know that they must embrace innovation, but it can be very hard for some companies to do so. It comes down to a space full of the emotional, psychological, spiritual, and complex "soft stuff" of being human. An organization's social environment may limit or liberate the creative works and processes occurring within its domain. One's own state of consciousness also plays a crucial role in a person's creative thinking and behavior. The journey is inward for external excellence, the author says. Transformative leaders must be willing to not only go through the transition journey themselves, but to serve as guides for others treading the same path. The author introduces a TUAI Bridges Model for facilitating organizational transition as an emergent alternate for organizational change management. Synthesizing Theory U, Appreciative Inquiry, and the Bridges Transition Model, the TUAI model to offer a novel path for applying elevated consciousness in service of achieving a specific business transition.

In Chapter 12, Ángel López Mutuberría investigates the meaning of life and its pragmatic role in business practice. Meaningful and purposeful life are key traits underlying positive mental health. The author says that, fundamentally, every person is asking: *Who am I, really? How can I get in touch with this real self, underlying all my surface behavior? How can I become myself*? With a great churn in the social and political environment, the dominant model of business needs to change toward facilitating a more humanistic approach to management. Companies need to recognize human dignity as a non-negotiable part of management practices. Accepting people as they are with all that they bring, respecting their life philosophies, and enhancing who they want to become, as the basis of Jung's psychology, Seligman's positive psychology or Cooperrider's Appreciative Inquiry, companies can respect and honor the true nature of human beings. This study employs a qualitative grounded theory approach to data that has been gathered through semi-structured interviews designed with open questions and probes with 41 HR professionals. The chapter reports key findings for navigation of life through a careful balance of self, family, and work.

Chapter 13 presents the technique of Collaborative Autoethnography (CAE), a unique approach to learning through head and heart. Doing and being are often separated; it might be that in the CAE the distinctions are blurred. The authors Christian Earl List, Julia Storberg-Walker, Hermella G. Tekle, and Deyang Yu report on their experiences of working together through an innovative CAE longitudinal study. They all experienced a profound deepening of self-in-community, or a sense of authenticity/wholeness as they continue to "unboundarize" ourselves. This involves healing and intention—both are present in individual reflections as well. They report on their experiencing and learning about the connection between becoming whole within themselves and being able to stand whole in the company of others. In CAE, they learned about courage, vulnerability, cultures, love, and emergence. They also often experienced multiple synchronicities. They feel that they were enacting a new relational ontology through these shared experiences. The study also suggests implications for learning and being in group situations in safe, productive, and fulfilling ways.

In Chapter 14, on Sustainable Flourishing in Cities and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Larry Clay Jr reports on a new model and an empirical study to increase innovative capacity and resilience in cities. This chapter begins with a challenge for community, business,

political leaders, and all other stakeholders in cities is to transform their cities as sustainable ecosystems (CASE), to stimulate a healthy economy, and to promote mass social prosperity. The classical change management approaches to city development, environmental management, systems management, and social behavioral interventions have proven, at best, a 30% success rate of implementation. This study combines the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Platform along with the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR) framework, that have both been well studied individually, into an innovative AI-SOAR framework. It develops a measurable model of AI-SOAR on innovation and resilience by conceptualizing, structuring, operationalizing, and measuring AI-SOAR. It proposes a structural model where the operationalized system of AI-SOAR influences innovative capacity and resilience in the CASE. A survey of 340 city stakeholder respondents supports both the measurable model of AI-SOAR and also the structural model by which AI-SOAR influences system level innovative capacity and resilience in cities.

In Chapter 15, on the values underlying Sustainability Reporting systems, HaiYan Song and Dennis Heaton report from a qualitative study that thematically coded sustainability reports from 26 Small and Medium Enterprises. They observe that the business world is experiencing a paradigm shift from more of a-profit-centered perspective to a global movement of people using business as a force for good. Business profitability is now referred to in a sustainability-driven context, where social and environmental values are also of great significance. There are many sustainability management and reporting approaches, strategies, and performance such as by using disclosure metrics (e.g. GRI-G4 guideline and GRI standards), being evaluated through rating and ranking metrics systems (e.g. Global 100) or applying for organizational certifications (e.g. B-Corp, ISO certifications). From an analysis of sustainability reports using a range of reporting systems, this study identifies four emerging themes as the fundamentals underlying sustainability reports. The four themes are virtue ethic-based measures for sustainability policy and strategy, rightness ethic-based measures for sustainability actions, consequence ethic for sustainability performance, and governance/context evaluation for sustainability management approach.

In Chapter 16, Anil Maheshwari uses this final chapter to connect back with the three principles of consciousness-based leadership and management stated at the beginning of this book, using the metaphor of ocean to frame the organization. Metaphors are an analogical way of describing

something that is less known in terms of something that is better known and understood. Metaphors frame and drive our thoughts and actions in personal as well as organizational life. A process or journey approach to organizing would tend to produce different approaches and actions, than one based on a predetermined objective. There are over a dozen popular metaphors including that of an organization as a machine, or as an organization, or an information-processing entity, or as a system/web. The similarities between the ocean and the organization are framed using a comprehensive framework of five Vs—Velocity, Variety, Vitality, Versatility, and Volume. The chapter also recommends phrases and actions based on the five Vs of the ocean metaphor to implement the principles of CBLM.

Conclusion

This volume presented an overview of a broad range of consciousness-based perspectives on creating organizational conditions for oneness and flourishing in the world. The approaches can be applied individually, or they may be combined to create more potent combinations to achieve higher levels of peace and prosperity for the organizations and the world.

Reference

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. Harper Perennial.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Introduction to consciousness-based leadership and management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave Macmillan.

CHAPTER 2

A Larger Lens: Medical Students Benefit from Consciousness-Based Self-Care

Tony Nader, Richard J. Carroll, Frederick W. Travis, James B. Bray, Gregory Gruener, Stuart Rothenberg, Duncan H. Brown, and Carla L. Brown

Self-Care Challenge

When student F07-M1[1] began medical school in 2019 just before the COVID-19 pandemic, he worried that his earlier inability to finish his thesis in microbiology would predict his future. He opted for the 2-credit

[1] M1 indicates his first-year status and F07 is his anonymous letter/number identifier. Students are in years 1 (M1) and 2 (M2), (the basic science years), through years 3 (M3) and 4 (M4), (the clinical years).

T. Nader
Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA

R. J. Carroll · J. B. Bray · G. Gruener · D. H. Brown · C. L. Brown (✉)
Loyola University Chicago, Stritch School of Medicine, Maywood, IL, USA
e-mail: cbrown16@luc.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_2

elective offered by Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, Maywood, Illinois USA, which included the Transcendental Meditation® (TM®) technique. In the pandemic year after his class was sent into quarantine, he became a medical superstar. He co-founded a very successful modular, free, accessible virtual education platform. He also co-authored a textbook. As a result, he received his association's top award and was honored as a scholar by several organizations. He described innumerable opportunities for personal growth. With TM practice he reported, "an improved sense of self—being able to connect with myself and ground myself twice daily, which helped me realize what I was feeling and why. I really didn't know how much information the human brain could retain: now, I know that there really are no limits on how much you can achieve."

Job Burnout: A Serious Management Challenge

Job burnout manifested by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment is a growing challenge for physicians and healthcare workers (HCW) exposed to high levels of stress (Hockaday, 2017). HCW burnout, already at high levels prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, was greatly aggravated by demands placed on the healthcare workforce by the pandemic (Shanafelt et al., 2022). A study of US emergency medical services (EMS) providers examined burnout scores measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and found high levels of depersonalization, and medium levels of personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion (Sporer, 2021). Burnout can lead to lost productivity, attrition, increased medical errors, and alarming levels

G. Gruener
e-mail: ggruene@luc.edu

D. H. Brown
e-mail: dbrown@tm.org

T. Nader · F. W. Travis
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: ftravis@miu.edu

S. Rothenberg
David Lynch Foundation, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: srothenberg.md@davidlynchfoundation.org

of suicide among medical students and younger physicians (Patel et al., 2018). Many medical schools have estimated that over half of all medical students are affected (Ishak et al., 2013).

Workplace wellness programs have tried to address burnout, but have neither substantially improved the mental health or productivity of employees, nor the bottom line of organizations (Jones et al., 2019; Lieberman, 2019; Song & Baicker, 2019). Lieberman (ibid.) therefore recommends considering positive psychology-based curricular interventions. These have also been explored by physicians who are seeking to help prevent student burnout (Bazargan-Hejazi et al., 2021). A Mayo Clinic prospective study of "student engagement with a wellness curriculum" found, however, that the students still didn't engage, because the students said that "unscheduled time was more influential to their well-being than the wellness curriculum, which may reflect the rigorous and time-consuming nature of medical school" (Edmonds et al., 2023, p. 62).

Consciousness: The Missing Element

Consciousness is usually understood as one's waking, conscious experience. However, the TM technique involves inner experiences of consciousness as a silent, awake field underlying thought (Maharishi, 1969) that is fundamental to all other experiences (Nader, 2021). Wallace (1970) and Wallace and Benson (1972) described this as a fourth state of consciousness that is physiologically distinct from waking, dreaming, and sleeping states, which Wallace referred to as "restful alertness." Restful alertness is characterized by a quiet mind, settled physiology, along with expanded inner awareness associated with a high degree of brain wave (EEG) coherence or integration, indicating balanced activation of the total brain. There are higher states of consciousness where restful alertness can be present even during activity (Alexander & Langer, 1990; Maheshwari, 2023; Mason et al., 1997; Nader, 2021; Nidich et al., 2000; Travis, 2014; Travis et al., 2002, 2004). Nader and Maheshwari (2023) theorized that development of consciousness can lead to higher purpose and to "intrinsic motivation and well-being" (Deci & Ryan, 2012b). Maheshwari (2023) showed that higher consciousness of leaders can create an environment of well-being in which teams and organizations can flourish.

Transcendental Meditation: A Technique for Development of Consciousness

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a simple, mental technique that allows one to access finer levels of one's own self (Nader, 2021). Benefits include reduced stress, improved mental clarity, health, social well-being and inner peace. The stress reduction resulting from twice-daily TM has been documented in workplaces (Alexander et al., 1993; Travis et al., 2018) and in the general population (Schneider et al., 2012).

Recent research suggests the practice of the TM technique modulates the stress response. Using a mixed method research protocol, including a randomized controlled design, Loiselle et al. (2023) found that academic medical faculty practicing the TM technique over 4 months, compared with non-meditating controls, experienced significantly reduced burnout as assessed by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) ($p = 0.020$), a significant reduction in emotional exhaustion ($p = 0.042$) and improvement in personal accomplishment ($p = 0.018$). In addition, depression was found to be significantly reduced in the TM group compared to controls ($p = 0.016$), making this the first known randomized controlled trial to show significantly reduced academic physician depression with a non-pharmacological intervention. In qualitative interviews, physicians in the TM group reported increased productivity, confidence, happiness, mental clarity, and improved relationships (op cit., 2022).

An HCW Wellness Program, called "Heal the Healers Now," was launched in 2020 as an evidence-based program for HCWs to combat burnout and support workplace well-being using the TM technique. A series of research studies on this program have found significant reductions in HCW burnout, emotional exhaustion, anxiety, perceived stress, depression, and improved sleep and mental well-being—often within weeks of starting the TM practice. These studies include:

- A pilot study of 31 emergency medicine clinicians (physicians, nurses, and physician assistants) at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, showed significant reductions in burnout, depression, anxiety, and perceived stress, with significantly improved quality of sleep (Azizoddin et al., 2021).

- A randomized controlled trial of 80 frontline healthcare workers at Duke University Medical Center during the pandemic found significant improvements in the TM group compared to controls in burnout, anxiety, and insomnia (Joshi et al., 2022).
- A controlled study of 120 healthcare workers at three Miami hospitals at the height of the COVID pandemic found highly significant improvements in management of depression, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, insomnia, and mental well-being beginning as soon as two weeks after starting TM and continuing throughout the 3-month study (Nestor et al., 2023).
- A pilot study with 24 nurses at a southwest Florida hospital found significant reductions over 4 months in compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and burnout and significantly improved resilience due to TM practice (Bonamer et al., 2019).

This current study contributes to these findings with documentation of benefits expressed by medical students in their own voices.

A New Academic Elective

A new 2-credit elective course, called *Physician Wellness through the Transcendental Meditation Technique* was introduced at the Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine in 2014. It is the first such elective course offered at any medical school. The curriculum begins with students learning the TM technique, taught by nationally Certified TM Instructors to ensure consistent results. The TM technique is practiced sitting comfortably in a chair with eyes closed for twenty minutes morning and evening. The coursework consists of six in-person lectures, which include review of a subset of over 400 peer-reviewed studies on the TM program from perspectives and disciplines including physiology, neuroscience, endocrinology, cardiology, health policy, and behavioral health and wellness. Students are required to write a personal reflective essay at the end of the course. This chapter examines the benefits reported by students in those essays, and what explained their results.

Research Method

The students' written reflections offer a rich source of data about their experiences resulting from the practice of the TM technique. Narrative reflections have been used in prior studies and "provide insight into the personal and professional development of medical students" (Kuczewski et al., 2014). They can also support curricular reform (Gaufberg et al., 2010). This retrospective evaluation of the 5-page reflections was exempted through expedited review by the Institutional Review Board of the Loyola University Chicago Health Sciences Division. The students were organized into cohorts (Chart 2.1).

A subset of the students enrolled in the course provided written permission to quote their papers. However, logistics precluded authors' ability to expand the sample, as most students had left the school when this research commenced. However, a review of all of the papers indicated comparable results between those who granted permission and those who could not be quoted or cited. Students were assigned a letter/number identifier to establish anonymity. Eight years of reflections were analyzed and reported. Results were compared within and across cohorts using the grounded theory approach outlined by Charmaz (2014). Co-authors CB and DB, and two other coders read papers independently and identified

Chart 2.1 Demographic data: students enrolled in 2-credit course

Cohort /year of elective	*Students enrolled*	*Students in sample*	*Sample: meditated 2X daily*	*Sample: meditated 1X daily or less often*
I 2014–2015, 1st	39	23	16	7
II 2015–2018, 2nd-4th	93	32	28	4
III 2018–2019, 5th	59	28	19	9
IV 2019–2020, 6th	42	18	15	3
V 2020–2022, 7th, 8th	104	42	36	6
	337	143	114	29

categories in open coding. These results were reviewed using constant comparison to identify themes. The coding effort was verified among coders as consistent and relevant. More analytical and substantive codes were developed through continuous coding and memos. The coding effort was extended to examine benefits and patterns as they emerged.

Summary of Findings

Three major benefits of regular TM practice were observed in these data:

1. Students found that their most pressing needs—stress and anxiety reduction—were relieved with the TM technique.
2. Students reported multiple positive benefits relating to many facets of their health and well-being, including:
    - Greater mental clarity and improved focus
    - Increased resilience, energy, stamina and efficiency
    - Increased confidence, sense of control and adaptability
    - Increased emotional stability, compassion, and empathy
    - Improved memory, recall, learning and ability to synthesize
    - Improved sleep and relief from physical symptoms of anxiety
    - Improved relationships and teamwork
3. With regular practice of the TM technique, the students gained additional productive time daily.

Reduction of Stress and Anxiety

Prior to medical school, most students described having long-term anxiety. Once they began their first and second pre-clinical years, they felt overwhelmed by the quantity of material they needed to master. By the time they reached the third and fourth clinical years, stress had amplified. Academic deans and faculty realized they needed to help medical students effectively address mental health issues early in their medical life. Therefore, the TM course was introduced. For students, their first issue was stress relief. One of the fourth-year medical students (A13-M4), explained:

> As medical students, we are constantly bogged down with a number of stressors. Sometimes it starts feeling unbearable. Medical school can lead to a feeling of being trapped, with no time for yourself. Add to that your personal life, and stress can start to own you.

Another fourth-year student (A11-M4) observed that TM practice alleviated stress immediately:

> My experiences with TM were instantly productive. I was surprised with how quickly I saw changes in my life. I started having more peace. Things seemed to simply be smoother and easier. Stressors were still present, in fact stronger than ever at times, but they now appeared much more manageable overall.

135 of 143 students reported relief from anxiety as a result of their TM practice. Table 2.1 presents examples of students' experiences of reduced stress and anxiety. Students from all eight years of the course described similar results, with seven students within the eight years describing relief from very significant anxiety, including suicidal ideation; all reported vastly improved confidence and engagement.

Two first-year students, E17-M1 and D21-M1, not only found that their learning improved, but also described how dissolution of stress resulted in decreased anxiety. A third-year student, F06-M3, was surprised with the energy and mental clarity that resulted when he practiced the TM technique, because he had thought that TM was just for relaxation. His reflection indicates that stress was eliminated, and his study and exam results indicate his anxiety was also eliminated. Another third-year student, F26-M3 had expected to be anxious her whole life but was no longer; her alertness and energy also improved.

46 of 143 students specifically described improvement with their exam experience because of TM practice. A fourth-year student, A2-M4, said she was "almost eerily calm during the entire exam and better able to think through things as a result of reduced anxiety." Students who did not mention a backlog of anxiety reported subtle changes as a result of TM practice. A first-year student, E15-M1, described "constant calmness, maintained regardless of stressors" with "subtle improvements in cognitive abilities and reasoning skills" and "greater ease in applying concepts

Table 2.1 Reduction of anxiety for TM medical school practitioners

	E17-Fourth year	*D21-First year*	*F06-Third year*	*F26-Third year*
Summary	E17 was suffering from anxiety, panic attacks, and depression.She was terrified that her mental health symptoms "would resurface." Fellow students encouraged her to join the TM elective. "With TM, I would come to an inner stillness where everything in the world felt right, no matter how crazy and chaotic the outside world seemed. I felt okay and safe." Her confidence grew; she excelled, and graduated at the top of her class. "No matter how challenging and tough the days were, I made it through. I felt in many ways that I thrived. I feel like TM was a big part of that."	D21 had good results with TM, but stopped meditating. Then, she was unable to concentrate. Resuming TM, her memory and ability to learn new material improved, and headaches and anxiety lessened. Her blood pressure normalized.	F06 had failed several exams and faced one that would determine his future. With TM his back pain decreased, and blood pressure lowered. He did not expect the energy and focus, which helped him pass the exam.	F26 had been anxious for 20 years. With TM her alertness and energy immediately improved. She could study for extended periods, leading to a successful board exam. "With TM I realized anxiety and stress don't have to be parts of me; they don't have to be a given to my existence."

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

	E17-Fourth year	*D21-First year*	*F06-Third year*	*F26-Third year*
Prior experience	Mental health challenges developed: anxiousness and chronic stress led to irritable bowel symptoms, frequent headaches, and regular heart palpitations. "Eventually panic attacks consumed my whole being. I was lost, isolated, overwhelmed. I became drastically depressed. Despite profound progress with medication and therapy, I felt emptiness; something was missing. I was terrified these feelings would resurface and control my life."	Over a break, I stopped meditating and I was suddenly distraught with the stress of medical school, emotionally labile, and unable to focus and concentrate effectively. My stress headaches started returning.	I was burned out. I didn't have the mental energy to properly prepare. My practice test for the Step 2 exam indicated I would most likely fail, which would make matching into a residency program almost impossible.	Since age of 8, for 20 years, anxiety and stress plagued me. I believed these feelings helped my performance.
Resilience	My reaction to stress shifted. Small things that would have previously bothered me to the core were no longer burdensome.	Resuming TM, my memory and ability to learn new material improved, my headaches lessened and my anxiety about the overwhelming amount of material that I needed to master became manageable again.		COVID-19 stripped us our sense of control. In times of stress, grief and uncertainty, TM became a steady force of comfort and calmness I could rely on.

	E17-Fourth year	*D21-First year*	*F06-Third year*	*F26-Third year*
Efficiency, Focus	With newfound inner peace and broadened perspective, I remained relaxed when deadlines approached. I no longer procrastinated. Instead, I worked effectively and efficiently.		After regularly practicing TM I had renewed mental energy, focus and clarity not present before.	
Compassion, Relationships	I am a more grounded, peaceful and authentic version of myself, better equipped to serve my future patients.			I am more patient with my family and loved ones. I see patients in a different light: I'm less irritable.
Performance, Confidence	My confidence grew, my flexibility magnified, and my happiness expanded. I got "A"s on my exams. My classmates even said that I was "always calm," "never stressed," and "always on top of my stuff."		I knew when I left the testing center that I had passed the exam. I performed better than expected, and had self-confidence.	Increased alertness led me to score better on my board exam than I could have imagined.
Physical changes		My headaches lessened. My physician has been monitoring me for intermittent headaches and the possibility of borderline high blood pressure. She said the headaches might be stress or vascular induced. With routine TM, headaches occur much less often.	Back pain made sleep and study difficult. It had hurt to sit and even to lie down. After TM, my body felt relaxed, as if I had taken a muscle relaxer. I had more energy mentally and physically, and was able to work out more consistently. My blood pressure also decreased.	

to novel problems more quickly and efficiently." Another student, E11-M1, felt "more rested after meditation than after a full night's sleep" and said,

> When I meditate twice daily, my sleep improves and is deeper. Given the significant demands on our time and the almost constant stream of information being thrust toward us, TM offers the perfect mental recuperation needed to thrive.

All-Encompassing Improvement in Health and Well-Being

A second-year student, A18-M2, characterized benefits from TM practice as "all encompassing." This was an apt description of students' experience across the cohorts. She wrote,

> Health goes beyond the absence of illness. Health is multifaceted: some may begin meditating to address one problem, but will experience positive effects in every aspect of their lives. Health includes overall physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

She said that as a result of TM:

> I am able to roll with the punches and think clearly instead of having problems concentrating with an overactive brain. I don't feel like I am being pulled in a million directions. If I meditate twice daily, I feel more refreshed and can absorb information more effectively. Because I can focus better, I get my work done more quickly which leaves me more time for a social life. My relationships with those close to me have greatly improved because I am much less stressed.

Many students reported spill-over effects like A18-M2 above, which are also seen in Table 2.2. Every student emphasized different aspects of their results. As another student G15-M1 (Table 2.2) put it, "I have felt more prepared while attacking schoolwork knowing that I have this tool that is augmenting my mental acuity, stamina and endurance." He wrote, "I feel more connected to my inner self and with others." Some students described improved empathy and many described improved memory, recall, and learning.

Table 2.2 Benefits among TM medical school practitioners

	A18-First year	*D23-Third year*	*E14-First year*	*G15-First year*
Summary	A18 describes more orderly thinking (resulting in changed study habits and life beyond school), and having more flexibility in the face of changing circumstances.	D23 experienced panic as he transitioned to his third year. Then, thoughts and feelings became more positive. Evening meditation allowed him to focus for several additional hours. He became more organized and succinct in his presentations and developed greater trust with patients.	E14 had prior experiences of her heart racing before walking into exams; with TM she felt more confident and sure of herself and improved her performance. She was better able to cope with her fiancé's overseas deployment, feeling "calm and realistic and in control of my fate."	G15 described TM as a means for strengthening mental acuity, stamina and endurance during the pandemic year. He felt more balanced and energized.
Prior experience	Since high school I can remember having problems concentrating. My brain had always felt like it was overactive.	I tried to keep my cool, not letting anyone know about how much pressure I was feeling; but on the inside, it felt like I was drowning.	I used to feel quite anxious before exams. I would constantly dwell on the material I did not know.	The pandemic increased worries and life stressors from the lifestyle changes, plus the continuing challenge of managing the academic workload. It impacted my mental health and that of my peers.

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

	A18-First year	*D23-Third year*	*E14-First year*	*G15-First year*
Mental clarity	My thinking became more ordered and sequential. I am less likely to forget something important.		My mind seems to be more organized after TM.	TM helps my retention and slows my mind down. I can digest information at a comprehensible speed.
Time, Efficiency and Focus	I don't feel like I am being pulled in a million directions.	My favorite side effect is my increased efficiency. After 20 minutes of TM, I am able to study and remain focused for several hours.	I have gained back several more productive hours in my day. My afternoon meditations leave me much more alert and energized. I return to my work with "fresh eyes," ready to tackle a challenge.	I feel more energized and balanced throughout the day.
Productivity	Because I can focus better I get my work done more quickly, which leaves me more time for a social life.	Through TM I have improved my mental and physical health. TM calms my nerves and allows me not only to push through long days but to dominate them.	The overwhelming amount of work seems to be lighter and more manageable after meditating, and I am able to prioritize my workload.	

	A18-First year	*D23-Third year*	*E14-First year*	*G15-First year*
Adaptability	The biggest change is my response when things aren't going according to plan. I am able to "roll with the punches."		Meditating has transformed how I respond to stress. Worry no longer occupies my thoughts when I face uncertainty. I am calm and realistic and feel in control of my fate.	I'm more present in the moment.
Compassion, Relationships, Teamwork	My relationships with those close to me have greatly improved because I am much less stressed.	I am a better teammate to the rest of the residents and students on days that I meditate twice. I am less irritated or annoyed.		
Physical changes		I have been able to sleep through the night more consistently.		My sleep improved.

Increased Empathy, Resilience, and Internal Locus of Control

Like students profiled in prior tables, the exemplars featured in Table 2.3 experienced changes in many aspects of life simultaneously. Students observed that as a result of regularly practicing the TM technique, they "felt more in control" (F04-M4), and found themselves to be "a more grounded, peaceful, and authentic version" of themselves (E17-M4), with more compassion and tolerance toward themselves and others. G03-M1 explained that "TM helped me get in touch with myself."

Exemplar students in Table 2.3 emphasized that their TM practice helped foster their listening skills, empathy, and compassion. They also reported improved efficiency, energy and stamina. They described a more rested physiology: not being burned out, feeling energized, and handling long hours of studying.

Improved Memory Due To Restful Alertness and Better Sleep

First-year exemplar students shown in Table 2.4 described improvements in learning. These included being more centered, patient and calm, and going with the flow of emotions. Students reported growth of mental clarity, recall, and synthesis.

Table 2.4 exemplars also reported that TM practice relieved debilitating stress and anxiety. The third- and fourth-year students shown in prior tables experienced equally dramatic changes in learning—including improved test performance (e.g. F06-M4, Table 2.1); improved ability to interact with patients (e.g. F14-M4, Table 2.3); and significantly improved test scores (e.g. F26-M3, Table 2.1).

A Larger Lens: Broader Comprehension, Mental Clarity, and Effortless Recall

After 9 months of TM practice, a first-year student (E20-M1, Table 2.4) described TM as "the strongest and most effective mental healthcare" that she had encountered. Regular experience of restful alertness was easy, yielding recall of complex information.

Table 2.3 Holistic growth including compassion, empathy, and trust

	E13-First year	*F04-Fourth year*	*F14-Fourth year*	*G3-First year*
Summary	E13-M1: Her anxiety and distress were intense and uncomfortable. TM practice changed her mood and focus, allowing her to increase her workload. She wrote, "It was as though someone had flipped a switch." Her efficiency sky-rocketed; she was a happier and kinder person. She did not require as much sleep and woke up feeling more refreshed; she no longer had daily headaches.	F04-M4 "had a lot of baseline anxiety and stress as I completed interviews for residency, interspersed with clinical rotations." With TM he was "more efficient during the day, needed less time to complete tasks and felt more in control." He felt more energized throughout the day, and became more compassionate, tolerant and forgiving toward himself and those around him.	F14-M4 reduced her burnout, increased her efficiency and felt greater empathy. Building trust with her patients resulted from "an improved outlook," which she attributed to her TM practice.	G3-M1 struggled with insomnia and depression: she found it difficult to slow down and be kind to herself. With TM she had previously experienced reduced anxiety, better sleep, and an overall feeling of serenity. Resuming TM, she attained more clarity in everyday life and felt energized during long study sessions.
Prior experience	My stress levels were so intense that I was physically uncomfortable, which often impeded my ability to study.	I had a lot of baseline anxiety and stress. I was still completing interviews for residency while balancing clinical rotations.	I was afraid that my Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder would get in the way of being successful with the technique.	I am an anxious person.

(continued)

Table 2.3 (continued)

	E13-First year	*F04-Fourth year*	*F14-Fourth year*	*G3-First year*
Compassion, Trust, Empathy	My compassion and tolerance towards myself and others grew as a result of practicing TM. I became a better listener, because I was more at peace with myself.	I have become much more compassionate and tolerant towards myself and to those around me. I have a lot more patience when interacting with staff and patients.	With TM I feel empathy. This changes how I interact with patients and their families. TM helps instill a non-judgmental attitude in me, which helps inspire patients' trust in me. This improved outlook yields better ways to discuss difficult topics with patients.	I noticed many benefits, including reduced anxiety, better sleep, and an overall feeling of serenity. TM helped me get in touch with myself and observe my thoughts and emotions, rather than let myself be consumed by them.
Mental clarity	I noted a deep improvement in my ability to focus.	Meditation has allowed me to retain information much more efficiently	I have more patience with difficult patients as a result of going into each room with a clearer and fresher mind.	I have attained more clarity in my everyday life
Energy, Stamina	My ability to prioritize and organize my time has improved remarkably. I can handle long hours of studying.	One of the biggest changes: being much more energized throughout the day.	I do not feel as burnt out by a string of patients with challenging psycho-social concerns or problems.	I feel energized during long study sessions.

	E13-First year	*F04-Fourth year*	*F14-Fourth year*	*G3-First year*
Time, Efficiency	My efficiency has sky-rocketed. It was as though someone had "flipped a switch." I am now able to tolerate large workloads and the stress of studying for exams without physical or mental distress.	I am more efficient during the day, need less time to complete tasks and feel more in control. TM has allowed me to concentrate better while I am studying. I focus on the task at hand instead of looking at my cell phone or getting lost on the Internet.	I have increased my productivity and efficiency assessing the plan of care and completing paperwork after each patient, even before the patient leaves.	
Other	I no longer have daily headaches, which I had believed were inevitable.	I have been doing better on my exams; I believe meditation is at the core of my increased academic success.	I'm better able to work with everyone on the team. My coworkers have begun to treat me better as well; we have better communication.	

Table 2.4 Improved memory, learning

	D11-First year	*D19-First year*	*E16-First year*	*E20-First year*	*E34-First year*
Summary	D11-M1 was constantly stressed over things out of his control. His moods swung erratically. With TM he felt more centered and internally quiet. He was noticeably less anxious and nervous during times of great stress. He could recall and synthesize information more quickly and clearly than previously.	When D19-M1 studied and then meditated, she remembered the material more clearly, and recalled details more easily. She was more patient and understanding and felt more at ease. She didn't get as worn out from studying as others. She slept better.	Previously E16-M1 was very anxious and nervous. TM helped her "gain control of myself" and "reach a level of calm." She could "go with the flow and accept experiences I didn't control." She became a more flexible person. She more easily recalled information. She could think clearly and express her thoughts more efficiently.	E20-M1 was prone to anxiety and expected frequent flare ups as a first-year medical student. Instead she enjoyed her studies meditated daily with a group of friends, and found she had clear recall of information after meditating.	E34-M1: I have recognized immediate improvements in my emotional health, interpersonal relationships, executive function, and reasoning skills.
Sleep, Rest	I'm much more energetic and less fatigued.	I don't get burnt out and worn out from studying like my peers and friends. I fall asleep easier, and get better sleep.		I like the twice daily practice of settling in, grounding, and allowing myself to rest through TM.	

	D11-First year	*D19-First year*	*E16-First year*	*E20-First year*	*E34-First year*
Emotions	I began to feel more centered, internally quiet. My mind was not rushing all over the place. I was no longer stressing over things out of my control I'm a lot less judgmental.	People say I am more patient and understanding. I feel more at ease with myself and with my surroundings I understand myself better and will therefore understand my patients better.	TM helped me reach a level of calm and allowed me to be comfortable going with the flow and accepting the experiences I did not have control over. This helped me become a more flexible and calmer person overall.		My emotions are now self-confident and optimistic. In the past, a nagging feeling of loneliness perpetually interrupted my day. Without persistent worrying, I am happier overall. With regular practice of TM, I am now at peace with who I am. I am much more forgiving.
Reasoning	I think more clearly.		This experience of calm has contributed to my ability to think clearly.		The improved ability to organize information in my mind has made studying more meaningful and more efficient.

(continued)

Table 2.4 (continued)

	D11-First year	*D19-First year*	*E16-First year*	*E20-First year*	*E34-First year*
Memory, Recall	Where I have seen the most benefit is my memory I have been able to recall information a lot quicker.	After I study and then take a break to meditate, I remember the material from earlier more clearly I can recall details more easily.	I find it easier to recall information. This was something that used to be clouded by my nerves and stress.	I liken TM to sleeping: your brain compiles information and stores it for later use. I easily recall information days and weeks later.	During tests, I can readily recall complex concepts without thinking through each individual piece. Now I have the ability to see through a larger lens. I'll be better equipped to diagnose and treat my patients.
Synthesis	I am able to synthesize ideas now: before I was not able to do so as quickly and clearly.		I noticed I was able to express my thoughts more clearly and efficiently.		I can more easily visualize the "big picture." Interconnections between concepts or facts are instantly clear; in the past I would struggle to understand these relationships.

> TM has allowed me to be more focused when I studied, and to give my mind a rest after learning complex, challenging information. I almost liken TM to sleeping, when your brain compiles information and stores it for later use. When I meditate after a lecture, I do not actively think of material learned, however I find myself more easily recalling that information days and weeks later.

After TM practice, another first-year student (E34-M1, Table 2.4) reported being "present and fully participating in each moment- more mindful of my surroundings."

> In the past, thinking about my to-do-list would provoke anxiety. Now the negative emotions once associated with "responsibility" have disappeared. This altered mindset has provided me with a clear-headedness that allows me to effectively and confidently tackle daily tasks. With our heavy course load, this tool is invaluable.

E34-M1 further observed that twice-daily TM practice improved "the quality of my thoughts and emotions, and was also reflected in improvements in my organizational and reasoning skills." She was then able to "more easily visualize the big picture. Interconnections between concepts or facts were instantly clear, when in the past I would struggle to understand these relationships." Study was more meaningful and efficient with "improved ability to organize information in my mind." "When it comes time for a test, I find that I can readily recall complex concepts without thinking through each individual piece." Fellow students reported similar experiences due to regular transcending; they were more alive and present, less reactive, and could efficiently recall and synthesize ideas.

Gaining More Productive Time, Improving Relationships and Teamwork

Nearly every student had to evaluate whether they could afford to meditate 20 minutes twice a day. Those who regularly practiced TM twice daily were surprised when they gained, rather than lost, productive time. They reported a gain of 2–5 hours per day (E14-M1, Table 2.2). A third-year student (FN26-M3, Table 2.1), wrote:

> I find that when I meditate before dinner, I am more productive for the evening. Being in medical school, when I am dismissed from the clinic, I

> still have to study and read each night. Having this second dose of productivity has drastically changed my performance on exams. I can do more longer and feel less stressed when doing it.

In addition to being more productive, students reported being more positive; "I was a more easygoing and intuitive team member when interacting with my colleagues and patients" (F05-M4).

Frequency of Meditation Matters

When students missed a TM session, they noticed a difference in their focus and well-being.

> I didn't realize how much stress I was harboring, and I worked hard to make a habit of meditating after waking up and before dinner every day. I noticed if I skipped a session, my mind would start to crave that moment of quiet I would normally get from TM (E16-M1, Table 2.4).

A few students found that sudden changes in their schedules, such as travel, caused them to occasionally miss their TM practice. They then realized the value of investing 20 minutes twice daily, motivating them to restart their TM practice (D21-M1, Table 2.1).

Students who meditated only once per day also experienced increased calm, decreased anxiety, and improved focus. They did not, however, report transformative or all-encompassing changes as reported by students meditating twice daily. This finding resonates with dosage-dependent results of TM seen in earlier research in many settings and populations (Alexander et al., 1993; Herron & Rees, 2017; Orme-Johnson & Moore, 2003; Schneider et al., 2012; Tjoa, 1975; Wendt et al., 2015).

Group TM Practice Provided Peer Support and Greater Benefits

Students independently organized themselves into groups, explaining that practicing one of the two daily TM sessions with others markedly improved benefits and regularity for them. For example, one student (A12-M4) meditated with others during all four years of her medical training.

> Three or four of us started meditating together, because it was important to make sure that we were each meditating. Some people in our group had family stressors going on; some were just feeling the stress of the exam. We coordinated schedules because it was really valuable and kept all of us accountable.

What Explained the Benefits?

Students reported experiencing deep and efficient rest. This nurtured their innate capacity to refine their own physiological functioning, thus opening up mental reserves and balancing the activity of their nervous system (Nader, 2001, 2021). With deep rest, students observed that TM practice helped them build a "sense of control," strengthening confidence, motivation, well-being and happiness. According to clinical neuropsychologist William Stixrud, the deep rest that the TM technique offers also normalizes the stress response and inoculates against stress. Stress is poisonous to learning, judgment, and adaptive functioning—and to the physical and mental health of individuals and organizations (Stixrud, 2012). Students' TM practice also appeared to have noticeably improved their sense of autonomy (Stixrud & Johnson, 2018). According to self-determination theory, "being autonomous refers to acting with a sense of volition and the experience of willingness. When people are intrinsically motivated, they are more wholeheartedly engaged, persistent, and efficacious than when controlled in their motivations" (Deci & Ryan, 2012a, p. 1).

Research over several decades (including that cited in the opening pages of this chapter) has examined the effects of the TM program in educational, organizational, and business settings. Several studies indicate that EEG coherence seen during TM practice resulted in increases in autonomy and self-actualization (Alexander et al., 1991). Travis et al. (2018) found that 79 of 96 randomly assigned central office administrators and staff at the San Francisco Unified School District who practiced the TM technique significantly increased EEG brain coherence and significantly decreased mood disturbance and anxiety, anger, depression, fatigue, and confusion.

A meta-analysis documented a significant reduction in anxiety from the TM technique (Orme-Johnson & Barnes, 2014). Restful alertness achieved daily with TM practice helps normalize neurological and

neuroendocrine functioning (Hebert et al., 2005; Travis et al., 2009; Walton et al., 2004). Reduction in stress-related neurochemicals suggests that the TM technique reduces sympathetic nervous system activity (Barnes & Orme-Johnson, 2012). NIH-funded research reported a significant reduction in stress and cardiovascular risk factors, as well as significant reduction in the risk of heart attack, stroke, or death (Schneider et al., 2012; Walton, 1995; Walton et al., 2002).

The goal of the TM technique is not merely to occasionally experience inner silence, but to systematically experience higher consciousness in all endeavors and relationships: to live enlightenment (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1984). Regular practice of the TM technique over time cultures the brain and nervous system to spontaneously maintain this inner silence and calm during activity. This is based on improved neuroplasticity of the brain. Travis explains, "Experience changes the brain, which integrates the holistic brain networks with the decision-making brain networks" (Travis, 2015, p. 27). Action has a new foundation in the silent inner stability, wide-awake awareness, and growth-motivation (Travis, 2015; Travis et al., 2009). Over a period of time, the regular experience of expanded consciousness supports adult development and self-realization (Alexander et al., 1990).

Improved Empathy, Socialization and Internal Locus of Control

Students found that practicing the TM technique regularly fostered a silent inner stability, leading to a spontaneous growth of empathy. These experiences take on more importance when considering that empathy is often lost or severely diminished in medical school training, and especially in clinical years (Hojat et al., 2009). Jean Twenge (2004, p. 308) describes changes in generational socialization that has resulted in "young Americans increasingly believing their lives are controlled by outside forces rather than their own efforts. People who believe they are in control of their destinies have an internal locus of control ('internals'). Those who believe that luck and powerful others determine their fate have an external locus of control ('externals')." She concluded that "U.S. adolescents and young adults are in the midst of a mental health crisis" (Twenge, 2020, p. 19). According to Stixrud (2012), TM practice promotes the experience of being in one's "right mind," with a more internal locus of control. Increasingly, the mind is better connected, less reactive, more self-aware.

These psychological changes are supported by known effects of TM practice on strengthening frontal brain circuits that regulate stress reactivity. This allows one to experience the brain and emotions normally when not in a self-protective mode. Put broadly, more awareness results in less stress and more empathy. Therefore, Stixrud prescribed the TM technique to students as a means of experiencing "radical down time to allow the mind to refresh itself" (Stixrud & Johnson, 2018, p. 136).

Results of a meta-analysis examining sleep quality and sleep duration among medical students ($n = 10{,}420$) concluded that sleep disruption is endemic in the population of medical students, suggesting the need for an urgent intervention aimed at improving their sleep quality as a way of increasing academic achievement and, ultimately, the quality of health care (Seoane et al., 2020). Students in this study reported that they experienced deep rest as a result of TM practice, leading to improved sleep. In another study, clinical trials studying relief from sleep disorders as a result of the TM technique included a five-month trial with 735 Japanese industrial workers. TM practice reduced by 30% the number of workers with delayed sleep onset and those with middle of the night insomnia by 26% (Haratani & Hemmi, 1990, cited by Rothenberg, 2019).

Improved Learning

Students described dramatic reduction in anxiety and sustained growth of confidence and well-being, which improved their endurance, productivity, mood, and energy. Students reported that the TM technique led to an unusual clarity of mind, improved emotions, and enhanced organizational and reasoning abilities. Students developed a new ability to recall material from earlier lessons, and rapidly and profoundly synthesize and make connections (see Table 2.4). TM Founder Maharishi Mahesh Yogi explained that simply transcending twice daily, alternated with action, stabilizes broader awareness in the learner. With expanded consciousness one gains intimacy with topics studied as well as self-confidence.

> When every wave of knowledge gained is connected with the Self, that knowledge becomes a living reality of daily life. It develops ones feeling of being familiar and intimate with everything and everyone, so that no sphere of life remains strange to the students. This growth of self-confidence and self-sufficiency creates a balanced and integrated personality (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, cited by Dillbeck & Dillbeck, 1987, p. 14).

Students reported that they knew themselves better and were more comfortable within themselves. One student described "seeing through a larger lens, and seeing the bigger picture." This is the goal of Consciousness-based education (CBE) that Maharishi developed (Llewellyn & Pearson, 2011).

Discussion and Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, medical school students told the Mayo Clinic that in the near-term they did not tend to access the wellness offerings provided at their school because they had no time (Edmonds et al., 2023). In contrast, this study found that with twice a day practice of the TM technique, students actually gained hours of productive time every day. Students, such as A15-M4 below, also reported that their TM practice fit well within their curriculum and their demanding schedules:

> While training to become an emergency medicine physician, I need something to provide stability and comfort through the continual flux of an ever-changing schedule. I have realized throughout this year of rotations that TM, though profound in its impact, can be performed with little interference to daily life.

Mayo clinic surveys found that students valued autonomy and unscheduled time, in large part because of the pressing requirements of their studies. Loyola medical students participating in this study were able to meditate on their own schedule. Their motivation to meditate was a direct result of the benefits that they experienced. They found that TM practice was self-reinforcing. Practicing regularly led to the experience of a more settled physiology, and it became routine. One student (D19-M2) wrote:

> It is very special that our school of medicine took the opportunity to teach us about TM. It is a great first step in incorporating this easy, life-changing practice into medicine as a whole. However, more is needed. All students should learn about Transcendental Meditation and its beneficial effects.

Findings from this research suggest the TM technique could be a fundamental component of medical student wellness programs and for the wellness industry in general. Medical students' benefits suggest that this technique—based on effortlessly developing clearer awareness and more

refined and restored physiological functioning—provides a tool for coping with stress and anxiety. More importantly, it provides a basis for continued growth, learning, and the development of leadership skills, which include mental clarity, higher purpose, clear communication and relationship skills, judgment, and intuition (Nader and Maheshwari, 2023). Additional research is needed to examine the application of this Consciousness-Based educational technique/self-care approach within other medical schools and within health care system as a whole. This approach also holds promise for other branches of professional education and practice.

For more information on this paper please visit https://dtni.miu.edu/a-larger-lens

Acknowledgements Authors would like to thank the academic deans, physicians, and students at the Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine who participated in the MDED-400 elective. Authors are also deeply grateful for the financial support of Robert C. Dohmen, Clark Erickson, the Lary Foundation, and anonymous donors, who have made this program and research possible.

References

Alexander, C. N., Davies, J. L., Dixon, C. A., Dillbeck, M. C., Druker, S. M., Oetzel, R. M., Muehlman, J. M., & Orme-Johnson, D. W. (1990). Growth of higher stages of consciousness: Maharishi's vedic psychology of human development. In C. N. Alexander, & E. J. Langer (Eds.), *Higher stages of human development: Perspectives on adult growth* (286–341). Oxford University Press.

Alexander, C. N., Rainforth, M. V., & Gelderloos, P. (1991). Transcendental Meditation, self-actualization, and psychological health: A Conceptual overview and statistical meta-analysis. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 6*(5), 189.

Alexander, C. N., Swanson, G. C., Rainforth, M. V., Carlisle, T. W., Todd, C. C., & Oates, R. M., Jr. (1993). Effects of the Transcendental Meditation program on stress reduction, health, and employee development: A prospective study in two occupational settings. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping, 6*(3), 245–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/10615809308248383

Azizoddin, D. R., Kvaternik, N., Beck, M., et al. (2021). Heal the Healers: A pilot study evaluating the feasibility, acceptability, and exploratory efficacy of a Transcendental Meditation intervention for emergency clinicians during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. *JACEP Open, 2*(6), e12619, 5–6.

Barnes, V., & Orme-Johnson, D. (2012). Prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease in adolescents and adults through the Transcendental Meditation® program: A research review update. *Current Hypertension Reviews, 8*(3), 227–242.

Bazargan-Hejazi, S., Shirazi, A., Wang, A., Shlobin, N. A., Karunungan, K., Shulman, J., Marzio, R., Ebrahim, G., Shay, W., & Slavin, S. (2021). Contribution of a positive psychology-based conceptual framework in reducing physician burnout and improving well-being: A systematic review. *BMC Medical Education, 21*(1), 1–12.

Bonamer, J., et al. (2019). Self-care strategies for professional development: Transcendental Meditation reduces compassion fatigue and improves resilience for nurses. *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development, 35*(2), 93–97.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012a). Self-determination theory in health care and its relations to motivational interviewing: A few comments. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, 9*, 24.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012b). Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory. In R. M. Ryan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of human motivation* (pp. 85–107). Oxford University Press.

Dillbeck, S. L., & Dillbeck, M. C. (1987). The Maharishi technology of the unified field in education: Principles, practice, and research. *Modern Science and Vedic Science, 1*(4), 383–431.

Edmonds, V. S., Chatterjee, K., Girardo, M. E., Butterfield, R. J., III., & Stonnington, C. M. (2023). Evaluation of a novel wellness curriculum on medical student wellbeing and engagement demonstrates a need for student-driven wellness programming. *Teaching and Learning in Medicine, 35*(1), 52–64.

Gaufberg, E. H., Batalden, M. Sands, R., & Bell, S. K. (2010). Medical school education: The hidden curriculum: What can we learn from third-year medical student narrative reflections? *Academic Medicine, 85*(11), 1709–1716.

Haratani, T., & Hemmi, T. (1990). Effects of Transcendental Meditation on the mental health of industrial workers. *Japanese Journal of Industrial Health, 32*, 656.

Hebert, R., Lehmann, D., Tan, G., Travis, F., & Arenander, A. (2005). Enhanced EEG alpha time-domain phase synchrony during Transcendental Meditation: Implications for cortical integration theory. *Signal Processing, 85*(11), 2213–2232.

Herron, R. E., & Rees, B. (2017). The Transcendental Meditation program's impact on the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder of veterans: An uncontrolled pilot study. *Military Medicine, 1*, 1–7.

Hockaday, M. S. (2017). Trauma leadership strategies to prevent and reduce burnout in urban academic trauma centers. *Journal of Trauma Nursing, 24*(6), 345–350.

Hojat, M., Vergare, M. J., Maxwell, K., Brainard, G., Herrine, S. K., Isenberg, G. A., Veloski, J., & Gonnella, J. S. (2009, September). The devil is in the third year: A longitudinal study of erosion of empathy in medical school. *Academic Medicine, 84*(9), 1182–1191.

Ishak, W., Nikravesh, R., Lederer, S., Perry, R., Ogunyemi, D., & Bernstein, C. (2013). Burnout in medical students: A systematic review. *The Clinical Teacher, 10*(4), 242–245.

Jones, D., Molitor, D., & Reif, J. (2019). What do workplace wellness programs do? Evidence from the Illinois workplace wellness study. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 134*(4), 1747–1791.

Joshi, S., Wong, A. I., Brucker, A., Ardito, T. A., Chow, S., Vaishnavi, S., & Lee, P. J. (2022). Efficacy of Transcendental Meditation to reduce stress among health care workers: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Network Open, 5*(9), e2231917.

Kuczewski, M. G., McCarthy, M. P., Michelfelder, A., Anderson, E. E., Wasson, K., & Hatchett, L. (2014, January). "I will never let that be ok again": Student reflections on competent spiritual care for dying patients. *Academic Medicine, 89*(1), 54–59.

Lieberman, C. (2019). What wellness programs don't do for workers. *Harvard Business Review*, p. 14.

Llewellyn, D., & Pearson, C. (2011). *Consciousness-based education: A foundation for teaching and learning in the academic disciplines*. MIU Press.

Loiselle, M., Brown, C., Travis, F., Gruener, G., Rainforth, M., & Nidich, S. (2023). Effects of Transcendental Meditation on academic physician burnout and depression: A mixed methods randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions, 10*, 1097.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1969). *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on the Bhagavad-Gita: A new translation and commentary with Sanskrit text (Chapters 1 to 6, Vol. 2913)*. Penguin.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1984). *The science of being and the art of living*. Age of Enlightenment Press.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Introduction to Consciousness-based Leadership and Management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing (Vol. 1). Palgrave Macmillan.

Mason, L., Alexander, C., Travis, F., Marsh, G., Orme-Johnson, D. W., Gackenback, J., Mason, D. C., Rainforth, M., & Walton, K. G. (1997). Electrophysiological correlates of higher states of consciousness during sleep in

long-term practitioners of the Transcendental Meditation program. *Sleep, 20*, 102–110.

Nader, T. (2001). *Human physiology: Expression of Veda and the Vedic literature*. Maharishi Vedic University.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness: Simple answers to the big questions in life*. Random House Penguin, e-book.

Nader, T., & Maheshwari, A. (2023). Consciousness as the source of purposeful leadership. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave Macmillan.

Nestor, M., Lawson, A., & Daniel, F. (2023, March 3). Improving the mental health and well-being of healthcare providers using the Transcendental Meditation technique during the COVID-19 pandemic: A parallel population study. *Plos One*. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0265046

Nidich, S. I., Nidich, R. J., & Alexander, C. N. (2000). Moral Development and ṇiousness. *Journal of Adult Development, 7*, 217–225. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009559327351

Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Moore, R. M. (2003). First prison study using the Transcendental Meditation program: La Tuna federal penitentiary. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 36*, 89–96.

Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Barnes, V. A. (2014). Effects of the Transcendental Meditation technique on trait anxiety: A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, 20*(5), 330–341.

Patel, R., Bachu, R., Adikey, A., Malik, M., & Shah, M. (2018). Factors related to physician burnout and its consequences: A Review. *Behavioral Sciences*, *8*(11), 98. MDPI AG. http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/bs8110098

Rothenberg, S. (2019). *Transcendental Meditation®: Clinical applications and research review* (unpublished manuscript).

Schneider, R. H., Grim, C. E., Rainforth, M. V., Kotchen, T., Nidich, S. I., Gaylord-King, C., Salerno, J. W., Kotchen, J. M., & Alexander, C. N. (2012). Stress reduction in the secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease: A randomized controlled trial of Transcendental Meditation and health education in African Americans. *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes, 5*(6), 750–758.

Seoane, H. A., Moschetto, L., Orliacq, F., Orliacq, J., Serrano, E., Inés Cazenave, M., Vigo, D. E., & Perez-Lloret, S. (2020). Sleep disruption in medicine students and its relationship with impaired academic performance: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sleep Medicine Reviews, 53*(2020), 101333.

Shanafelt, T. D., West, C. P., Dyrbye, L. N., Trockel, M., Tutty, M., Wang, H., Carlasare, L. E., Sinsky, C., et al. (2022). Changes in burnout and satisfaction

with work-life integration in physicians during the first 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings, 97*(12), 2248–2258.

Song, Z., & Baicker, K. (2019). Effect of a workplace wellness program on employee health and economic outcomes: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA, 321*(15), 1491–1501.

Sporer, C. (2021). Burnout in emergency medical technicians and paramedics in the USA. *International Journal of Emergency Services, 10*(3), 366–389.

Stixrud, W. R. (2012). Why stress is such a big deal. *Journal of Management Education, 36*(2), 135–142. https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562911430317. Retrieved March 12, 2022, from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1052562911430317

Stixrud, W., & Johnson, N. (2018). *The self-driven child: The science and sense of giving your kids more control over their lives*. Penguin Random House.

Tjoa, A. (1975). Increased intelligence and reduced neuroticism through the Transcendental Meditation program. *Gedrag: Tijdschrift voor Psychologie* [Behavior: Journal of Psychology], *3*, 167–182.

Travis, F. (2014). Transcendental experiences during meditation practice. *New York Academy of Sciences: Advances in Meditation Research: Neuroscience and Clinical Applications, 1*, 1–8.

Travis, F. (2015). How meditation heals: The brain and higher states of consciousness. In R. W. Boyer, F. Travis, V. A. Barnes, N. E. Rosenthal, J. Brooks, S. Grosswald, W. R. Stixrud, D. Lovell-Smith, M. Rainforth, R. Herron, D. W. Orme-Johnson, A. Arenander, & J. Krag (Eds.), *Prescribing health: Transcendental Meditation in contemporary medical care* (pp. 25–47). Rowman & Littlefield.

Travis, F., Arenander, A., & DuBois, D. (2004). Psychological and physiological characteristics of a proposed object-referral/self-referral continuum of self-awareness. *Consciousness and Cognition, 13*(2), 401–420.

Travis, F., Tecce, J., Arenander, A., & Wallace, R. K. (2002). Patterns of EEG coherence, power, and contingent negative variation characterize the integration of transcendental and waking states. *Biological Psychology, 61*(3), 293–319.

Travis, F., Haaga, D. A., Hagelin, J., Tanner, M., Nidich, S., Gaylord-King, C., Grosswald, S., Rainforth, M., & Schneider, R. H. (2009). Effects of Transcendental Meditation practice on brain functioning and stress reactivity in college students. *International Journal of Psychophysiology, 71*(2), 170–176.

Travis, F., Valosek, L., Konrad, A, Link, J., Salerno, J., Scheller, R., & Nidich, S. (2018). Effect of meditation on psychological distress and brain functioning: A randomized controlled study. *Brain and Cognition, 125*, 100–105.

Twenge, J. M. (2020). Increases in depression, self-harm, and suicide among U.S. Adolescents after 2012 and links to technology use: Possible mechanisms. *Psychiatric Research and Clinical Practice, 2*, 19–25.

Twenge, J. M., Im, C., & Zhang, L. (2004). It's beyond my control: A cross-temporal meta-analysis of increasing externality in locus of control, 1960–2002. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 8*(3), 308–319.

Wallace, R. K. (1970). Physiological effects of Transcendental Meditation. *Science, 167*, 1751–1754.

Wallace, R. K., & Benson, H. (1972). The physiology of meditation. *Scientific American, 226*, 84–90.

Walton, K. G., Fields, J. Z., Levitsky, D. K., Harris, D. A., Pugh, N. D., & Schneider, R. H. (2004). Lowering cortisol and CVD risk in postmenopausal women: A pilot study using the Transcendental Meditation program. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1032*(1), 211–215.

Walton, K. G. (1995). Stress reduction and preventing hypertension: Preliminary support for a psychoneuroendocrine mechanism. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, 1*(3), 263–283.

Walton, K. G., Schneider, R. H, Nidich, S. I., Salerno, J. W., Nordstrom, C. K., Merz, C. N. (2002). Psychosocial stress and cardiovascular disease. Part 2: effectiveness of the Transcendental Meditation program in treatment and prevention. *Behavioral Medicine, 28*(3), 106–123.

Wendt, S., Hipps, J., Abrams, A., Grant, J., Valosek, L., & Nidich, S. (2015). Practicing Transcendental Meditation in high schools: Relationship to well-being and academic achievement among students. *Contemporary School Psychology, 19*, 312–319.

CHAPTER 3

Consciousness and Flow for Leadership Development

David H. Goodman and Anil K. Maheshwari

> The first author asked Maharishi Mahesh Yogi a question at a public event: What is the fundamental quality of leadership? Without skipping a beat, Maharishi answered: "A leader is one who does not make a mistake."

How does one become a mistake-free leader? Development of consciousness through regular practice of transcendence was Maharishi's solution to being in the zone of mistake-free perception and action. Maharishi was discussing the condition of enlightenment. Flow experience, first coined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1991) is also reported to be an altered state of consciousness, where there can be sudden insight or remarkable efficacy during whatever activity one may be engaged. The flow experience tends

D. H. Goodman · A. K. Maheshwari (✉)
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

D. H. Goodman
e-mail: dgoodman@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_3

to arise unpredictably in a person, but when it does arise it is a highly significant peak experience for the experiencer. Those experiencing flow often report that they spontaneously operate at such a high level of performance, that they report a sense of perfection (Kotler, 2021). They often report that during the flow experience, their activity is without mistake and seemingly effortless. The experience of flow is different from higher states of consciousness, which when fully established are permanent and do not depend on external optimal situations.

The Flow Experience

Many individuals both historically and in present time have somehow touched upon a condition wherein their actions seem to express profound fluidity and joy. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, coined the term "flow" as a state of complete immersion in the task at hand, with great progress and productivity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). Flow is often also known as being "in the zone." It is an altered state of consciousness, where the sense of space and time may dissolve, and self-awareness may disappear. The choice of the word "flow" refers to being carried effortlessly by a river of inner energy or consciousness. It thus helps the performer tap into their inner creative genius and work at peak ability. One feels lucky, as in being at the right place at the right time. One may experience boundless energy during the flow experience.

Csikszentmihalyi (1991, 2020) used an experience sampling approach to discover the experience of flow. He also discovered that for a flow experience to arise there were certain prerequisites. (a) These include a mastery of craft in the experiencer. (b) The task requirements should be unambiguously specified. And (c) there should be a close match between the individual's level of skill and the presented challenge. Thus, flow is often seen to occur in well-defined tasks with defined boundaries, such as playing a musical instrument, competing in a sport, or leading a seminar. Such activities allow a world-class practitioner to perform and improvise without strain and struggle, thus providing the ingredients for flow to occur (Harung & Travis, 2018).

The flow experience is enjoyable and can also catalyze remarkable and creative activity. Pianists have reported that they play their best in such a flow situation. Kang (2023) reports about music teachers' flow experiences and found that there were two sets of key variables, one

in performance and the other in teaching. The open-ended descriptions revealed that music teachers cited topics pertaining to Challenge, Skills, Absorption, Enjoyment, and Flow Disruptor when describing flow in performance. In contrast, they tended to cite topics pertaining to Feedback, Goal Clarity, and Group Flow when describing flow in teaching.

Zausner (2022) suggests that artistic and scientific discoveries were often discovered in dreams, meditation, flow experiences and the like. Pearson (2016) reports on historical figures who have fathomed these ineffable experiences including Laoxzi, the Buddha, Rumi, and Meister Eckhart.

Csikszentmihalyi (1991, 2020) hypothesized that there needs to be a basic alignment of skill and challenge. Too much challenge creates anxiety and too much skill vis-à-vis challenge tends to create boredom. Flow experience often occurs in short but memorable times, where everything falls into place. Csikszentmihalyi (2020) further contended that the condition of flow is central to accomplishment of life goals, and that one wants to experience flow again and again. Desire for repeated experience of flow may thus be central to human motivation and achievement. The flow experience tends to arise serendipitously (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991, 2020). However, the flow experience has been observed more often in certain people and in predictable settings, such as when using the same keys of a piano or when playing on the same-size tennis court.

Kotler (2021), Bakker and Woerkmen (2017), and others have explored how flow could be made more predictable. Bakker and van Woerkom (2017) describe flow as a short-term peak experience that is characterized by absorption, work enjoyment, and intrinsic motivation, that is positively related to job performance. They suggest that four behavioral strategies may facilitate flow: self-leadership, job crafting, playful work design, and strengths use (p. 48). Self-leadership is involved in self-direction at work, eliminating work that does not serve an individual's purpose. Job crafting involves amending job requirements and even physical space so that work is more rewarding and satisfying. Playful work design fosters amusement and even entertainment (Nachmanovitch, 1991). Strengths-use is being aware of one's strengths and playing to them. These four strategies tend to have a positive impact on basic need satisfaction and flow.

Kotler (2021) recommends simple tips for creating flow conditions. Making a clear goals list and checking off all completed items on the list

tend to create a sense of progress (Amabile & Kramer, 2011). From a process side, Kotler recommends that the "sweet spot" for flow experience is 90 to 120 minutes of uninterrupted concentration activity, followed by returning to the present moment with gratitude. Kotler (2021) also presents triggers to enhance and help generate the flow experience. These triggers include autonomy, curiosity/passion/purpose, complete concentration, clear goals, immediate feedback, balance of skills and challenge, creativity, and a sense of control. Autonomy allows for self-directed thought and action. Being curious and having passion and purpose connects the doer with their concentrated activity and thus a high level of concentration is possible, without distractions. The importance of clear goals and feedback was first described by Csikszentmihalyi (1991) as an approximate equivalence of skills and challenge. Creativity and a sense of control align with being curious, having passion and purpose. These are both internal values/skills as well as external management tactics/strategies. Job design and satisfying basic needs including self-determination strategies (Deci & Ryan, 1995) may also facilitate the flow experience.

Is there a condition where flow-like experiences can be an ongoing reality? Csikszentmihalyi (2020) identified three streams of requirements for flow: self-actualization, intrinsic motivation, and play. Developing a higher state of consciousness may help with fulfilling all three streams for a frequent flow experience. In higher states of consciousness as defined by Maharishi (1995), Maslow's theory of self-realization is achieved, in that motivation is self-referential (Deci & Ryan, 1995), and everything can become play (Nachmanovitch, 1991).

Higher States of Consciousness

Consciousness is fundamental and the basis of experience (Maharishi, 1995; Nader, 2021). In waking state, it appears hidden. But it can be experienced when awareness transcends time and space and is in its simplest state. Throughout history, there have been sages and saints who have expounded upon the importance of this experience. In the Bhagavad-Gita (2:25 & 2:48), Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to "transcend," and then "Established in yoga, perform action" (Maharishi, 1967). The *Bhagavad-Gita* thus exhorts us to establish our awareness in the field of the Self, pure consciousness, and then act from that elevated

state with coherence, balance, peace, and success, operating from attunement with the laws of nature. The Delphic Oracle exclaimed: "Know Thyself." It is like the eye cannot see the eye. One's attention has been accustomed to focusing outward through the senses and not inward to the essence of experience, consciousness in its pure form, which is simple awareness without boundaries.

V-theory shows a simple model of how transcendence is accessible for everyone to experience (Maheshwari, 2023). In pure consciousness, the observer is left without any object of observation. This occurs when thought is experienced at finer and finer levels until thought is transcended. The fourth state of consciousness is distinct from the three ordinary states of sleeping, dreaming, and waking. The experience of the fourth state of consciousness is extolled in the ancient Vedic literature. Researchers have shown that the fourth state has a unique psychophysiological signature (Wallace, 1993) characterized by restful alertness in pure consciousness. The three other states have their psychophysiological structure. The dream state is characterized by rapid eye movement, unique EEG, and illusory images. Deep sleep is a state where brain wave activity exhibits low frequencies in the delta range from 0 to 4 hz.; waking state has an infinite array of experience from drowsiness to hyper awareness and thoughts and action are always changing (Wallace, 1993). The fourth state is the simplest state of restful alertness, where the body is deeply rested, and the mind is alert and settled into the field of pure consciousness. The fourth state is characterized by high EEG coherence in the Alpha 1 (8–10 hz) range in the frontal, occipital, temporal, and parietal lobes, and by reduced respiration and oxygen consumption (Fig. 3.1). (Travis et al. (2009).

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a standardized and well researched practice to experience consciousness in its pure form (Maharishi, 1966). It is a simple, mental technique practiced twice a day for twenty-minute sessions. The experience involves exploring finer states of thought until the mind transcends, or goes beyond, the finest state of thought where the mind is left in its simplest state, pure consciousness itself. Regular practice of TM allows the individual to systematically experience finer levels of the thinking process, until, reaching the finest level, the individual transcends thought, and experiences an unbounded field of consciousness. Over time, the inner experience of silence is enjoyed and integrated into activity eventually becoming established as an all-time higher state of

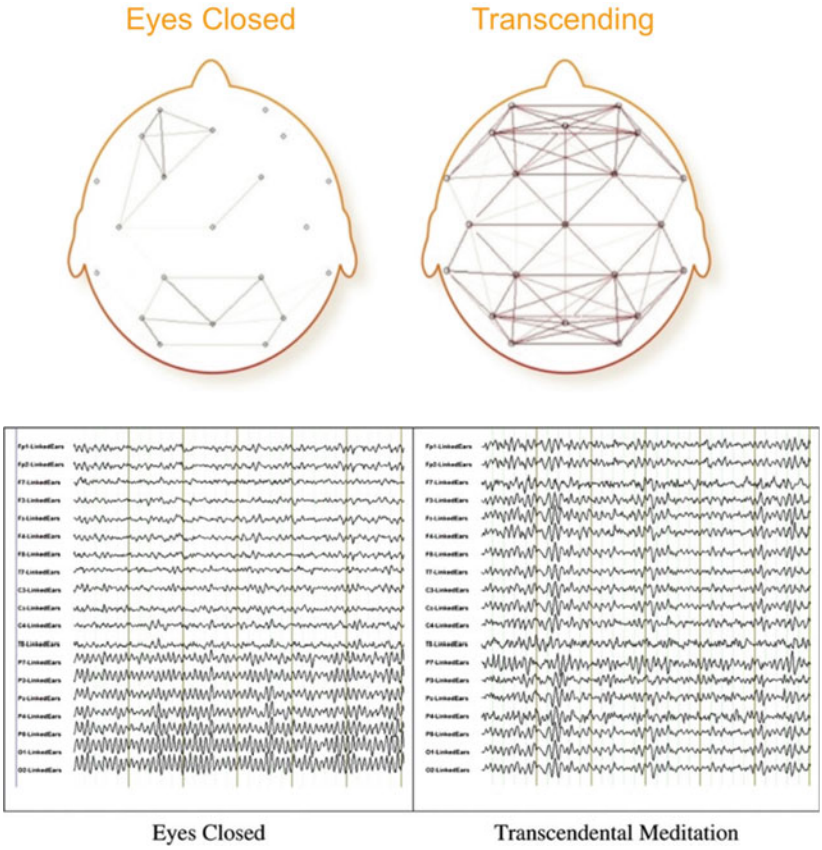


Fig. 3.1 EEG with eyes closed vs transcending (*Source* Travis et al. [2009, p. 25])

consciousness (Wallace, 1993). Pearson in his book *The Supreme Awakening* (2016) provides contemporary quotations on the transcendental experience, such as:

> I have the experience of transcending all activity and experience awareness as an unbounded unity. There is no longer any sense of "me" and "not me," no longer any thought or feelings or even a body — just the Self, and that is all there is, and that is all I am. (p. 52)

This unifying experience brings both coherence and deep rest to the brain. The brain becomes more peaceful, relaxed, efficient, and wakeful (Harung & Travis, 2018). The experience of transcending thought thus can have profound implications for managers and leaders.

Figure 3.1 shows a Comparison of EEG Coherence between Eyes Open and TM Practice (Travis et al., 2009). EEG Coherence of Eyes Closed and Transcending (Travis et al., 2009, p. 25).

According to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who identified the higher states of consciousness, there are seven distinct levels (Maheshwari, 2023). The higher states of consciousness are transcendental consciousness, cosmic consciousness, refined cosmic consciousness, and unity consciousness. With regular practice of TM, a fifth state is gained, which is called cosmic consciousness, or the state of Nirvana described historically by Lord Buddha (Pearson, 2016). This is a permanent state, which could be akin to being in flow all the time. The sixth state is then achieved when the senses and the perceptual mechanism can fathom the finest, celestial fabric of every experience. It is called glorified cosmic consciousness (Pearson, 2016). Eventually one can reach the seventh state of consciousness. This is termed unity consciousness which unfolds to the individual. In this state the object of perception is viewed in terms of one's unbounded awareness. This is termed full enlightenment, Supreme Knowledge, life in ultimate fulfillment (Maharishi, 1966).

Comparing Flow and Higher States of Consciousness

At the level of action and mind/body/ego there is a similar process between the flow and higher states of consciousness. However, the flow experience as defined by Csikszentmihalyi does not venture into the field of pure consciousness, although this field may be the source of energy of the flow experience. The Consciousness paradigm however considers pure consciousness as the primary reality foundational to thought and action. Table 3.1 lists major similarities and differences between Flow and higher states of consciousness.

While Maharishi says that the experience of the Self is the natural state of being and can be experienced by everyone with regular practice TM meditation, Csikszentmihalyi (1991) does not state the conditions in which the flow could be elicited and cultivated outside the context of an

Table 3.1 Similarities between Flow and higher states of consciousness

	Dimension	*Flow*	*Higher states of consciousness*
1	Challenge and skill	The task is not too easy for a person to feel bored but at the same time it is not stressful	Feeling of effortlessness where one is not feeling bored nor stressful. In cosmic consciousness, the Self witnesses activity and non-activity; in refined cosmic consciousness, the object is perceived at the finest relative state, and in Unity Consciousness, infinity pervades all perception. In all higher states, inner silence pervades one's consciousness
2	Activity and awareness merge	When a person's activity and awareness merge, a person would feel as if one's actions are automatic; they do not have to think about it	In cosmic consciousness, activity springs forth naturally. One "witnesses" waking, dreaming and sleep states. In unity consciousness, oneness permeates one's entire being
3	Timelessness	A person loses track of time	Experience of the Self, which is beyond time and space. This is the experience in the fifth, sixth, and seventh state of consciousness. One is also effective in the world of time and space

	Dimension	*Flow*	*Higher states of consciousness*
4	Loss of self-consciousness	There is a sense of immenseness during activity where the object and the self are one and cannot be distinguished	In cosmic consciousness, the nervous system always has Self-awareness. Pure consciousness witnesses waking, dreaming, and sleep states. One identifies with the Self beyond time and space and yet operates efficiently in time and space
5	Effortlessness	Having a sense of effortlessness, spontaneity	Transcendental consciousness is an effortless condition of inner silence, peace, and bliss. This is established in the fifth, sixth, and seventh state
6	Sense of control	A person feels like they have control. They are not stressed about the outcome of the situation, nor are they worried about failure	Self is beyond worry, and in unity consciousness, the awareness is beyond duality, in a state of undivided continuum beyond space/time
7	An autotelic experience	Is a feeling of pleasure while doing something that one truly enjoys	In cosmic consciousness, inner bliss is a continuum, even when one needs to plan and consider outcomes

autotelic activity. Table 3.2 investigates the differences between flow and higher states of consciousness.

Table 3.2 Differences between Flow and higher states of consciousness

	Dimension	*Flow*	*Higher states of consciousness*
1	Clarity of goals	The individual has clear goals and knows exactly what they would like to achieve	In silence there is spontaneity in terms of selecting goals; ambiguity is not a problem as one has cultivated the coexistence of opposites, silence and dynamism, rest and activity
2	Unambiguous feedback	Feedback that is received during the activity is not vague; a person in flow knows how well they are doing	The nervous system is cultured to maintain inner silence amid any circumstance or feedback, clear, or unclear
3	Duration of the experience	The flow experience has a beginning and end. This may be because the nervous system, due to stress cannot maintain flow	Inner silence is found in action and during rest, irrespective of conditions or external stimuli (Harung et al., 2009). The experience is permanent, when fully developed
4	Physiological response	There were higher skin galvanic responses in the flow, which is an indication of arousal. Higher skin galvanic responses are associated with the fight or flight responses	In transcendental consciousness, coherent alpha-1 EEG is present; in cosmic consciousness there is alpha-1 coherence along with delta EEG
5	Nature of the self	In the flow experience literature, there is no mention of the experience of silence. The individual self is described in terms of individual thought, feelings, and emotions. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1991) flow still has some experience of spontaneity, naturalness, effortlessness, and joy	The Self is described as the blissful, peaceful, non-dual source of thought; unmanifest; and the field of pure consciousness, pure Creative Intelligence

Higher States of Consciousness Leading to Flow

There is a heretofore unique situation found during TM discussed above and shown in Fig. 3.1 of brain wave coherence in the Alpha 1 range (Travis et al., 2009). Travis et al. (2009) created the Brain Integration Scale to measure the coherence level in a subject's brain. Harung and Travis (2018) in their book *World-Class Brain* reported on their research that top athletes, top managers, and world-class musicians all scored high on Travis' (2009) Brain Integration Scale, which indicates that the brain is more coherent, wakeful, and efficient for these top performers. They also reported many flow experiences. Top managers also tended to score high on moral reasoning. TM practice increases similar brain wave coherence and brain integration, indicating that the development of a world-class brain is possible for anyone through TM. Their results support the findings of Harung and Travis (2018). Being in the zone in certain sports settings and for certain musicians is a flow experience. The tennis court and the piano keyboard have specific standardized spatial limits. But in business, challenges and turbulence abound. That is not the condition in life writ large. In higher states of consciousness, one maintains field independence and an internal state of unbounded awareness regardless of the external circumstances in life (Gurubatham, 2023; Orme-Johnson & Haynes, 1981, this volume).

Flow and Maharishi's Fundamentals of Progress

Working in conjunction with leadership researchers, Maharishi (1975) formulated what he called the Fundamentals of Progress, which are stability, adaptability, purification, integration, and growth. These five variables all improve with regular practice of TM. Table 3.3 compares these five dimensions with the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) of Kouzes and Posner (2003) and with higher states of consciousness.

Conclusion

Individuals in higher states of consciousness report increased feelings of bliss, and often also a measurable calming of the physiological processes. Almost all spiritual traditions describe transcendent states. In more secular terms, such states are also described in states of flow, when one is magically transported to a state where creative things seem to happen

Table 3.3 The fundamentals of progress, the LPI, and flow experience comparison

Fundamentals of progress	*Flow experience and Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)*	*TM and higher states*
Stability	Flow: Mastery of craft, sport, vocation, or avocation, stable knowledge and/or muscle memory is a pre-requisite for the flow experience. There must be an equivalence of challenge to skill. World-class musicians, athletes, and top managers score high on Travis' Brain Integration scale LPI: From a stable consciousness, one can *model the way*	With TM, the individual experiences unbounded awareness, beyond time and space. The nervous system is more stable (galvanic skin response is more stable, and field independence increases); one's consciousness is more self-referential. On grows in internal stability during change. Travis and Harung, 2018 reported on high levels of the brain integration scale where the brain is more relaxed, wakeful, and efficient
Adaptability	Flow: Within the stable framework, one can play and adapt to changing circumstances. One feels invincible LPI: By being adaptable, one *can inspire a shared vision* and *challenge the process*	TM develops creativity, fluid intelligence, field independence, mental efficiency, practical intelligence, and emotional intelligence. Increase in reaction time indicates increase in adaptability
Integration	Flow: The flow experience is an expression of an integrated body/mind condition Moreover, silence and dynamism are integrated. Top managers, athletes, and musicians score high on Travis' Brain Integration Scale LPI: *Inspiring a Shared Vision* creates integration	TM integrates unbounded awareness into waking, dreaming and sleep state of consciousness. The unmanifest absolute is integrated with the ever-changing relative world
Purification	Flow: To have the flow experience, one needs to be one-pointed and not distracted. Therefore, one purifies out distractions. Top athletes, musicians, artists, actors, and leaders all know this and value time LPI *Challenging the process* is a form of purification	TM dissolves deeply rooted stress, which inhibit full expression of one's ability to use their full potential. This release of stress means one can use more of their full potential. An analogy of the snowplow may be helpful here. The obstacles are removed or purified as the vehicle moves forward

(continued)

Table 3.3 (continued)

Fundamentals of progress	*Flow experience and Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)*	*TM and higher states*
Growth	Flow: The flow experience challenges one to grow and accelerates growth, self-efficacy, and enjoyment LPI: *Enabling others to act* creates growth. So does *encouraging the heart*	Ego development occurs naturally in the growth to higher states of consciousness with regular practice of TM

Source Goodman (1996)

effortlessly (Csikszentmihalyi, 2020). We conclude that development of higher states of consciousness through the refinement of the nervous system creates conditions for flow for leaders and others. Higher states of consciousness, which have been reported throughout history and in many cultures represent the fulfillment of the flow experience in a more permanent and persistent manner.

There are gaps that merit further research. For example, what would happen if an entire management team were experiencing cosmic consciousness because of group practice of TM, and could experience greater productivity (Schmidt-Wilk, 1996)? The increases in leadership, job performance, and job and life satisfaction merit further study, and moreover, more organizations should study these benefits and consider adopting the practice of TM for freedom from stress and anxiety, all-encompassing personal development, and perhaps greater development of flow (Alexander et al., 1993; Nader et al., 2023; Valosek et al., 2018 this volume).

Imagining a More Flowing Future

Imagine leaders in higher states of consciousness creating a favorable work environment where everyone can flourish (Maheshwari, 2021). Imagine leaders and their teams experiencing flow as an all-time reality. Life would flow in enjoyment, creativity, and purpose. Imagine an entire organization operating in harmony and effectiveness. The five fundamentals of progress would be developed so that the leaders would be both stable and highly

adaptable to change. They would adapt to environmental changes, integrate new ideas, purify those ideas and influences that are not helpful, and grow their business in a healthy way. They would personally develop healthy habits to keep themselves centered, vigorous, and strong and be regular in developing higher states of consciousness. They would lead with emotional intelligence and would fully embrace and exhibit LPI's five exemplary leadership practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. They would exhibit high self-efficacy and enjoy a good joke. They would embrace the concept that giving is the basis for receiving. They would practice gratitude on a regular basis.

References

Alexander, C. N., Swanson, G. C., Rainforth, M. V., Carlisle, T. W., Todd, C. C., & Oates, R. (1993). Effects of the Transcendental Meditation Program on stress-reduction, health, and employee development: A prospective study in two occupational settings. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping, 6*, 245–262.

Amabile, T., & Kramer, S. (2011). *The progress principle: Using small wins to ignite joy, engagement, and creativity at work.* Harvard Business Press.

Bakker, A. B., & van Woerkom, M. (2017). Flow at work: A self-determination perspective. *Occupational Health Science, 1*(1), 47–65.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper Perennial.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2020). *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. Hachette.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1995). Human autonomy. In *Efficacy, agency, and self-esteem* (pp. 31–49). Springer.

Goodman, D. (1996). Construction and validation of an instrument designed to assess flow and job satisfaction in occupational settings: Exploratory research. Retrieved from Ann Arbor, MI: Dissertation Information Service, 1996. Order No. 9633807.

Gurubatham, M. (2023). Fluid intelligence for higher order thinking: Balancing the subjective and objective for sustaining impactful wisdom in this era of disruption. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 21). Palgrave Macmillan.

Harung, H. S., & Travis, F. (2018). *World-class brain*. Brain Integration Systems, LLV.

Harung, H., Travis, F., Blank, W., & Heaton, D. (2009). *Higher development, brain integration, and excellence in leadership.* Management Decision.

Kang, S. (2023). An exploratory study of music teachers' flow experiences between performing and teaching music. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, [s. l.], *70*(4), 407–424.

Kotler, S. K. (2021). *The art of impossible: A peak performance primer*. HarperCollins.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2003). *The leadership practices inventory (LPI): Self instrument* (Vol. 52). Wiley.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1966). *The science of being and art of living*. MIU Press.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1967). *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on the Bhagavad-Gita: A new translation and commentary, Chapters 1–6*. International SRM Publications.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1995). *Maharishi University of Management: Wholeness on the move*. Maharishi Prakshan.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and World Plan Executive Council. (1975). *Fundamentals of progress, scientific research on the Transcendental Meditation Program to develop the full potential of the individual*. World Plan Executive Council.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Introduction to consciousness-based leadership and management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave Macmillan.

Nachmanovitch, S. (1991). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art*. Penguin.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness*. Aguilar.

Nader, T., Carroll, R., Travis, F., Bray, J., Gruener, G., Rothenberg, S., Brown, D., & Brown, C. (2023, under review). A larger lens: Medical students benefit from consciousness-based self-care. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 2). Palgrave Macmillan.

Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Haynes, C. T. (1981). EEG phase coherence, pure consciousness, creativity, and TM–Sidhi experiences. *International Journal of Neuroscience, 13*(4), 211–217.

Pearson, C. (2016). *The supreme awakening: Experiences of enlightenment throughout time and how you can cultivate them*. Maharishi University of Management Press.

Schmidt-Wilk, J. (1996). Developing consciousness in organizations: The Transcendental Meditation program in business. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 10*(4), 429–444.

Travis, F., Haaga, D., Hagelin, J., Tanner, M., Arenander, A., Nidich, S., Gaylord-King, C., Grosswald, S., Rainforth, M., & Schneider, R. (2009). A self-referential default brain state: Patterns of coherence, power, and eLORETA sources during eyes-closed rest and Transcendental Meditation practice. *Cognitive Processing, 11*(1), 21–30.

Valosek, L., Link, J., Mills, P., Konrad, A., Rainforth, M., & Nidich, S. (2018). Effect of meditation on emotional intelligence and perceived stress in the workplace: A randomized controlled study. *The Permanente Journal, 22*, 17–172.

Wallace, R. K. (1993). *The physiology of consciousness*. Maharishi International University Press.

Zausner, T. (2022). *The creative trance: Altered states of consciousness and the creative process*. Cambridge University Press.

CHAPTER 4

Consciousness and Ambidexterity: Impact of Meditation on Oneness and Ambidextrous Behavior

Vikram Gulati and Anil K. Maheshwari

Introduction

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair. (Dickens, 1949)

These opening lines from the classic The Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens described the European mood in the times leading up to the French Revolution. They are unique where each pair of opposites does

V. Gulati (✉) · A. K. Maheshwari
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: vgulati@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_4

not have a preposition to connect the phrases. We no doubt add "and" and not "or". The entire essence of the book, the story, and the times it describes is embodied in the "and". If we replace "and" with anything else, there is perhaps no "Tale" to be told.

In their study of organizational effectiveness, James Collins and Jerry Porras noted that the distinguishing characteristic of highly visionary companies is the capacity not to be oppressed by the "Tyranny of the OR", but to liberate themselves with the "Genius of the AND" (Collins & Porras, 1994, p. 44). This importance of "and" is perhaps more relevant today than ever before. The ongoing COVID crisis has sharpened the focus on the tough choices that countries, businesses, and people have had to make between life *and* livelihood. These choices are of an existential nature and striking the right balance has been challenging for many. The notion of making hard choices and balance is something that businesses face very often. To succeed, business leaders need to excel in managing contradictions and conflicting priorities. They need to be creative *and* disciplined, innovative *and* process-oriented, and answer to the demands of profit, people, *and* the planet all at the same time (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004). This needs the leaders and their organizations to be able to manage exploratory *and* exploitative activities in a coordinated manner (Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996). Exploitative activities involve the refinement and extension of known competencies, and the resulting returns are more immediate and tangible. On the other hand, explorative activities involve experimentation with new alternatives and where the returns are more distant and risky (March, 1991). Coordinating the two is a serious challenge since explorative and exploitative activities compete for the same resources thus creating a tension that needs to be addressed (March, 1991). For such an organizational strategy to succeed, its leaders also need to be ambidextrous and manage the resulting tension (Mom et al., 2009).

A paradoxical mindset (PM) is an approach to address the tensions caused by factors, such as resource scarcity, when juxtaposed with the individual's experience of contradictory demands, goals, or perspectives. Whether individuals strive or struggle amid these tensions depends on the extent to which they have a PM. There is evidence to show that leaders with a high PM are better at managing explorative–exploitative behavior (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018) and in fact thrive even under conditions of high tension. Poole and Van de Ven (1989) describe four ways of working with paradoxes; keeping them in opposition, spatial separation,

temporal separation, and synthesis. Much of the research and practice has focused on the first three ways of working with paradoxes. The idea of synthesis finds resonance in Eastern religions and wisdom traditions in the form of the concept of oneness. These Eastern wisdom traditions also have developed practices of oneness like meditation. Sustainability leadership, for example, can be also thought of as being paradoxical in nature as it requires leaders to satisfy the seemingly contradictory demands of profit, people, and the planet all at the same time. A study of the leadership of sixteen exemplary sustainability-oriented companies showed that all of these leaders engaged in some form of practices of Oneness (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019).

This chapter will explore the role of practices of oneness and oneness in the question of why one leader has a more paradoxical mindset and is able to exhibit more ambidextrous behavior than the other and what can drive this preferred behavior. Ambidexterity is discussed at an organizational level, and at an individual level. It then examines the paradoxical nature of individual ambidextrous leadership and the role of the associated paradoxical mindset. It is followed by the concept of oneness and how it enhances the ability to work with contradictions. It is followed by an exploration of practices of developing oneness, such as meditation. Since oneness is largely a concept from Eastern philosophies, even as it is applied in largely Western management practices, the importance of culture of the leader is also explored.

Ambidexterity

Organizations and individuals alike face hard choices in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world. To succeed, businesses and business leaders need to excel in managing conflicting priorities. They need to be creative and disciplined, innovative and process-oriented, and answer to the demands of profit, people, and the planet all at the same time. In other words, they need to be *ambidextrous* (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; Mom et al., 2009; Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996).

Organizational Ambidexterity

Organizations evolve through a continuous change of minor events punctuated by radical change of significant episodes (Gersick, 1988). By analyzing patterns in the way organizations handle this, Tushman and

O'Reilly (1996) posit that to be successful, an organization and its leaders need to be good at handling both, low-level change and discontinuous change. Low-level change helps improve efficiencies, while discontinuous change offers significant opportunities to dramatically change the nature of the industry (Christensen, 2013). An empirical study of 206 manufacturing firms showed that firm performance was significantly associated with the extent of Ambidexterity demonstrated (He & Wong, 2004). These scholars argue that organizations achieve Ambidexterity by managing both explorative activities such as searching for, evaluating, and experimenting with new opportunities, and by developing new knowledge and skills and exploitative activities such as achieving higher reliability by refining existing competencies (March, 1991; Mom et al., 2007). Exploitative activities require process adherence and the focus is on quality and costs whereas explorative activities are creative, and the focus is on innovation (Raisch et al., 2009).

There is an associated concept of polarity management. Using the metaphor of breathing, which includes both inhalation and exhalation, Johnson (1993) proposes that organizations that can manage diametrically opposite poles within the organization structure, processes, and leadership outperform those that are unable to do so.

Organizational Ambidexterity can be implemented in two ways, structural and contextual (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004). Structural Ambidexterity is achieved by structurally separating teams that are involved in explorative and exploitative activities. As per Birkinshaw and Gibson (2004), structural Ambidexterity faces problems when the exploration-driven change that has been incubated separately needs to be integrated into the larger organization or when the incubation team for exploration is not given the right type of organizational support to realize the intended change. Contextual Ambidexterity overcomes this drawback. Employees must make their own decisions on how they divide their time. For example, should they focus on current accounts to meet a quota, or should they nurture new accounts with different needs? Contextual Ambidexterity calls for individual employees to make choices between exploitation-oriented and adaption exploration-oriented activities. Table 4.1 compares and contrasts structural and contextual Ambidexterity.

Researchers have conceptualized various forms of organizational ambidexterity. Double ambidexterity (Kaulio et al., 2017) proposes that exploration and exploitation are achieved by business models and/or technology innovations. Shifting the lens to competition and market

Table 4.1 Structural and contextual ambidexterity

	Structural ambidexterity	*Contextual ambidexterity*
What is it?	Organizational structural separation of exploration and exploitation businesses	Co-existence of exploration and exploitation businesses within one organizational structure
How is ambidexterity achieved?	Separation structures for exploration and exploitation activities	Individuals decide on how to divide their focus and time on exploration and exploitation activities
Role of management	To set priorities and define structures	To define the context within which individuals can set priorities
Role of individuals	Specialized in either exploration or exploitation-type activities	Generalist, able to switch between exploratory and exploitative activities
Decision-making	Predominantly centralized	Predominantly distributed

Note Adapted from "Building Ambidexterity Into an Organization" by J. Birkinshaw, and C. Gibson 2004. MIT Sloan Management Review, 45(4), 47–55

gives us relative (D'Souza et al., 2017) and hybrid (Ossenbrink et al., 2019) ambidexterity respectively. However, the need for an organization to perform both exploration and exploitation activities and have individual ambidexterity remains true across all forms of organizational ambidexterity.

Individual Ambidexterity (IA)

Ambidextrous organizations need ambidextrous leaders and managers, who have an ability to understand and be sensitive to the needs of very different types of business processes (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2004). A manager's ambidexterity can be referred to as a manager's behavioral orientation toward combining exploration and exploitation-related activities within a certain period of time (Mom et al., 2009). Operational managers may thus conduct both routine and nonroutine activities (Adler et al., 1999), fulfill administrative and entrepreneurial roles (Probst et al., 2011), and combine short- and long-term views (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

In a case study analysis of interviews with managers and leaders and review of company literature at IBM and NCR, Taylor and Helfat (2009)

showed the importance of middle management in providing organizational linkages that enable a firm to be ambidextrous and successfully manage radical change.

IA is typified by managers who (i) take the initiative and are alert to opportunities beyond the confines of their own job, (ii) are cooperative and seek out opportunities to combine their efforts with others, (iii) are brokers always looking to build internal linkages, and (iv) are multitaskers who are comfortable wearing more than one hat (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004). Mom et al. (2009) substantiated similar skills in a study of 719 business unit level and operational level managers, validating that ambidextrous managers (i) host contradictions, (ii) are multitaskers, and (iii) can both refine and renew their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

The alignment of the leadership with strategy is very important for its success (O'Reilly et al., 2010). This section will consider antecedents of IA at an (i) organizational level, (ii) individual level, (iii) combination of organizational and individual levels, and (iv) manifestation of exploration–exploitation tension as a consequence of IA.

Organizational Antecedents

Recognizing the need for IA for its managers and leaders' organizations have pursued many enabling strategies. These could be broadly considered as organizational factors that affect IA. These include factors such as.

Routinization and formalization of managers' tasks. Process management initiatives implemented for greater efficiency, create a high degree of routinization and formalization in manager work and inhibit manager Ambidexterity (Benner & Tushman, 2002). However, routinization processes combined with a high level of trust can actually help managers being more ambidextrous (Adler et al., 1999).

(De)-centralization or participation in decision-making. IA is enhanced when decision-making is more de-centralized and pushed lower within the organization (Benner & Tushman, 2003). Organizations that have built strong inter-unit coordination capabilities through cross-functional interfaces along with a high job rotation will favor the development of IA for its managers (Jansen et al., 2005). Learning within an organization can be limited by its inherent inability to consider, long-term and geographically remote scenarios or learning from failure. Managers of such organizations struggle to find the balance of exploration and exploitation behavior (Levinthal & March, 1993). IA is enhanced in

organizations that are designed to find a balance between the forces of search and stability (Rivkin & Siggelkow, 2003).

Socialization practices. Organization's socialization practices in terms of structures and processes to diffuse knowledge and culture have a significant impact on the extent of exploration and exploitation that managers exhibit. However, the extent and direction of impact are markedly different based on the extent of employee turnover, environmental turbulence, and the competitive environment (Levinthal & March, 1993; March, 1991).

Connectedness to other organization members. Connectedness defined as density of connections within the organization influences exploration and exploitation differently. Managers in organization with a high degree of connectedness are able to perform exploitative activities better than exploratory activities (Jansen et al., 2005; Sheremata, 2000).

Differential reward systems. Firm-wide performance-based incentive system combined with active oversight provide the appropriate balance for both search and stability processes that in turn favor managers' exploration and exploitation activities (Rivkin & Siggelkow, 2003). These incentive systems that support appropriate ambidextrous behavior should be consistent and long-term oriented. Short-term or frequent changes may disproportionately hamper the conditions for ambidextrous behavior (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004).

Values and norms. Process management activities driven values and norms are helpful to an organization only in stable conditions. Values and norms such as tolerance for ambiguity of manager's peer's and/or superior's provide the dynamism needed to create and sustain ambidextrous behavior (Benner & Tushman, 2003; Volberda, 1999).

Individual Antecedents

There are other factors that are more individual in nature in the organizational context that have been seen to have an impact on the individual manager's ambidexterity. (i) Tenure is seen to be a very significant positive predictor of IA, however longer functional tenure inhibits individual ambidexterity (Mom et al., 2015). (ii) From a work context perspective uncertainty in work environment and interdependence between roles has a favorable impact of IA on individual performance (Mom et al., 2015).

A small body of research has examined the cognitive and motivational profiles of managers who can be described as ambidextrous. To help

understand the cognitive capabilities that facilitate ambidextrous behaviors, Good and Michel (2013) propose an IA construct, composed of divergent thinking (representing exploration), focused attention (representing exploitation), and cognitive flexibility (representing ambidexterity as a whole). In a criterion-related predictive validity laboratory study of 181 undergraduate students, they demonstrated that IA as defined was able to explain significantly more variance in task adaptive performance as compared to intelligence. Interestingly, individuals with self-enhancement motivation are more likely to engage in exploitative activities, whereas those with high intrinsic motivation favor explorative activities (Kauppila, 2018).

Operational managers with high levels of role-based self-efficacy are also more confident and proactive about seeking and alternating among opposing tasks, goals, and mindsets (Phillips & Gully, 1997), which helps them to shift flexibly and quickly between exploration and exploitation activities (Laureiro-Martínez et al., 2015). A study of 467 managers across 52 financial services firms found that ability and motivation-enhancing HR practices contribute uniquely to ambidextrous behaviors of operational managers by increasing either their role-based self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation orientation. On a practical level, individuals tend to favor exploitative activities as compared to explorative activities because exploitation is more likely to lead to near-term favorable outcomes and because employees' existing skills and routines are already adapted to these activities (Danneels, 2008).

Interaction of Individual and Organizational Antecedents

Individual factors combine with organizational context to impact the ability to effectively manage the paradox inherent in ambidexterity. Individuals with intrinsic motivation are more likely to engage in exploitative activities as compared to explorative activities (Ryan & Deci, 2001). This is significantly more pronounced under highly dynamic environmental (market and technology) conditions (Kauppila, 2018). By actively managing the work environment, the organization can attenuate the tension between exploration and exploitation continuously while creating synthesizing capabilities (He & Wong, 2004).

Also, organizational culture has a salient impact on IA. Building a culture of deliberate perturbation, by introducing unfamiliar factors that disrupt day-to-day routine activity allows an organization to create opportunities for innovative approaches. Toyota was able to maintain

contradictions rooted in the ability of its employees at all organizational levels to engage in problem-solving. One methodology that Toyota uses to design perturbation-inducing systems is autonomation or *jidoka*. *Jidoka* is a process that stops production automatically when faults occur, thereby generating a perturbation. The best-known example of *jidoka* is the *andon* cord. Production workers are trained to respond to problems by pulling the *andon* cord that runs along the assembly line. Pulling the *andon* cord sounds a bell and lights up a visual control board indicating the location of the problem. This attracts the attention of the team leader who responds to the perturbation. If the problem can be resolved quickly, pulling the cord again signals that all is well and allows production to continue. Otherwise, the line segment stops automatically at the end of the cycle, generating a larger perturbation that attracts the attention of a more senior manager (Brunner et al., 2010).

Exploration–Exploitation Tension

Exploitative activities involve the refinement and extension of known competencies, and the returns are more immediate and tangible. On the other hand, explorative activities involve experimentation with new alternatives and the returns are more distant and risky (March, 1991). This creates tension and the essence of being ambidextrous is the ability to manage and thrive in this tension. Using a comparative case study approach to analyze five ambidextrous product design firms Andriopoulos and Lewis (2009) created a framework to examine the exploration–exploitation tension. Using the concept of paradox (Denison et al., 1995) to present the framework as a series of nested paradoxes of innovation in all aspects of the organization. The paradoxes are pursuing current profit vs. breakthrough strategies, tight or loosely coupled with evolving customer needs, and encouraging discipline vs. passion in employees. Building on the construct of paradox at different levels, a meta-analysis of 124 Ambidexterity and exploration/exploitation empirical studies showed that ambidextrous behavior creates paradoxical tension that is more pronounced at lower levels of management (Fourné, 2014). The same study also found that operating level managers struggled with coping with this tension, and as a result, exhibited lesser ambidextrous behavior than what was expected of them to meet organizational demands.

As shown in Fig. 4.1, it can be said that organizational ambidexterity is an important strategy for organizational success and for it to be successful the organization needs managers and leaders to have IA. There are very

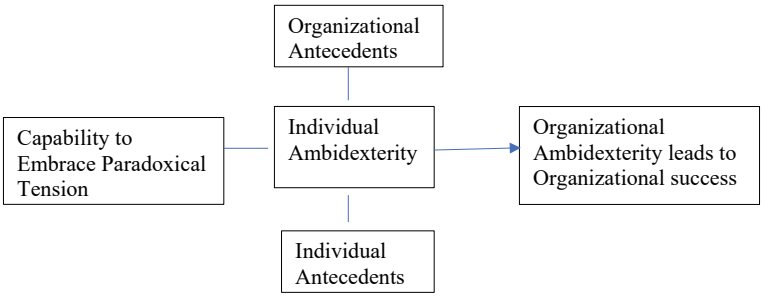


Fig. 4.1 Organizational ambidexterity needs individual ambidexterity

many organizational and individual antecedents that influence IA and the extent to which managers exhibit ambidextrous behavior depends on their capability to embrace paradoxical tensions.

The next section explores the PM that allows managers to embrace paradoxical tensions. The unit of analysis of this study is the individual. The previous sections considered the factors that enabled or inhibited IA from an organizational point of view. The focus will now shift to the mindset and practices that the individual could pursue at a personal level to facilitate ambidextrous behavior.

Paradoxical Mindset

Explorative and exploitative behaviors are paradoxical and create tension that has a direct impact on performance. Individuals differ in their capacity to cope with paradox, a trait referred to as PM. A micro foundational perspective of organizational ambidexterity suggests that the individual ability to deal with paradoxical demands is the building block for its emergence (Raisch et al., 2009). Individuals with a high PM are better at explorative–exploitative behavior (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018).

The ability to handle the exploration–exploitation tension may be enhanced by adapting the alternating cognitive processes of differentiation and integration (Smith & Tushman, 2005). Differentiating and integrating are opposing, yet complementary processes. Differentiating focuses on how existing products or competencies differ from one another. Integrating, in contrast, makes mindful synergies between these

products and competencies. These processes enable one another. Differentiating results in new categories and dimensions of the products and services and integrating reinforces the investment in each. It is the engagement in both of these cognitive processes that leads to paradoxical leadership behavior (PLB) (Zhang et al., 2015). PLB is a leader's behaviors that are "contradictory yet interrelated, to meet competing workplace demands simultaneously and over time" (p. 539). Zhang and colleagues conceptualized PLB as a behavioral syndrome that consists of five dimensions: (i) combining self-centeredness with other centeredness, (ii) maintaining both distance and closeness, (iii) maintaining decision control while allowing autonomy, (iv) enforcing work requirements, while allowing flexibility, and (v) treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individualization. PLB contributes positively to employee proactivity, proficiency, and adaptivity.

The core characteristics of paradox engender its persistence. Smith and Lewis (2011) define paradox as "contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time" (p. 382). Ambidexterity in terms of exploration and exploitation is a type of paradox that also persists over time. Organizations and individuals try to resolve it spatially in the form of structural Ambidexterity or temporally in the form of contextual ambidexterity but in real terms the paradox remains latent where both exploration and exploitation must be done with equal ease (Mom et al., 2009). Smith and Lewis (2011) posit that organizational paradoxes often remain latent, becoming salient, particularly under conditions of plurality, change, and scarcity. In an eight-sample study covering hundreds of participants, Miron-Spektor et al. (2018) show that a PM—the extent to which one is accepting of and energized by tensions—can help individuals leverage the paradoxical tensions and help improve in-role job performance and innovation. Based on this as shown in Fig. 4.2, it can be said the PM is an important enabler of ambidextrous behavior of exploration and exploitation.

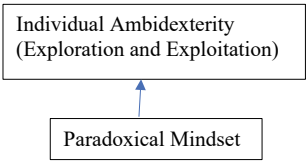


Fig. 4.2 Paradoxical mindset enables ambidextrous behavior

Paradox and Oneness

Paradox is not a new concept, it has roots in both Eastern and Western philosophy. From an Eastern perspective, the paradox is used as a lens for exploring the nature of existence. While individuals might experience tensions between oppositional elements, Eastern philosophies such as Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist suggest that doing so obscures their underlying *oneness or wholeness* (Schad et al., 2016). Instead, these traditions stress the interdependence between oppositional elements, suggesting that paradoxes need not be resolved, but rather embraced and *transcended* (Capra, 1975). In contrast, the Western approach focuses on the contradictions themselves and favors a dialectical approach of analysis/synthesis, thesis/antithesis focusing on the dualities of the paradox (Choi et al., 2007).

The idea of oneness is perhaps best illustrated by the Taoist yin–yang symbol, paradox highlights opposites (light–dark, masculine–feminine, life–death), which are viewed as interdependent, fluid, and natural (Chen, 2002; Peng & Nisbett, 1999). I-Ching (the book of changes) says: "The Dao is both the Yin and Yang". The *Atman* in the Vedantic traditions, Buddha-nature in Buddhism, *Echad* as a unifying principle in Judaism, all echo the idea of oneness. Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Muhammed, Lao Tzu—all these great figures, along with their spiritual traditions, have fundamentally the same message, which is the goal of oneness (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019).

Even as the concepts of oneness and wholeness are the basis of Eastern philosophies, these concepts are now getting more acceptance in the West. Leading quantum scientists such as Schrodinger, Oppenheimer, Planck, Heisenberg, and Bohm have also suggested the Vedic concept of Atman or the unbounded unified consciousness as the source of everything (Wilber, 2005). Atman is Totality (Schrodinger, 1956). The space-time forms can be considered a holographic projection of a higher dimensional consciousness (Bohm, 2002). Mass and energy, solid and vibration, can be seen as interchangeable manifestations of consciousness. Collective oneness through quantum empathy is the new understanding of reality from quantum field theory, neuroscience, and other scientific perspectives. Everything is totally interconnected, and one may realize that separation is an illusion (Pavlovich, 2020).

Measuring Oneness

Oneness can manifest at any and all of the following levels: (i) experience of oneness, (ii) cognitive belief in oneness, and (iii) the ability to engage in relationships through degrees of oneness versus separateness.

Experience of Oneness

In a study of high-performing athletes, business managers, and musicians, Harung & Travis (2016) found that high-performing individuals described experiences of being in the "zone". They defined peak experience as "moments of optimum human development and happiness—this is when one is living the full value of life. When one's awareness is greatly expanded, which is very different from one's normal waking experience" (Harung, 2018). High-performing individuals reported much higher frequency of such peak experiences. In addition, the role of experience is salient in religiousness and spirituality studies. Experience of constructs like awe, gratitude, mercy, sense of connection with the transcendent, and compassionate love are seen to be important in religiousness and spirituality studies (Underwood, 2011).

Belief in Oneness

The concept of oneness that has its roots in religions, wisdom traditions, and philosophical perspectives, also finds support in science, particularly quantum physics. Discoveries in quantum physics echo the themes of underlying unity and interconnectedness (Capra, 1975). Erwin Schrodinger, Nobel prize-winning physicist, observed that quantum physics reveals a basic oneness of the universe. So, although the source of beliefs may be different, individuals with diverse perspectives believe that everything exists together in unity.

Oneness in Relationships

The concept of oneness can also manifest in relationships that an individual feels with other individuals or groups. This is especially true for relationships at work. A sense of close relationship with work colleagues and supervisor could be a way by which the concept of oneness within the individual manifests in work situations. Figure 4.3 shows that an overall sense of oneness can help develop a PM and lead to ambidextrous behavior.

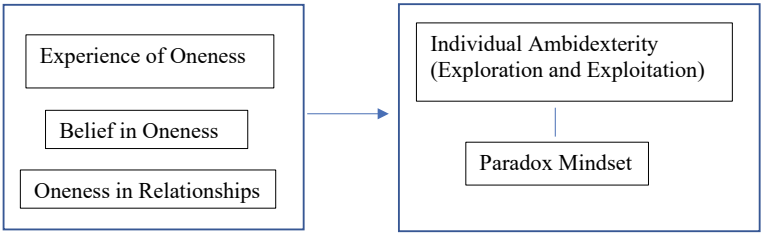


Fig. 4.3 Oneness, Paradox Mindset, and Individual Ambidexterity

Practices of Oneness

Practices of oneness are found in almost all major religions, wisdom traditions, and philosophical perspectives. This chapter will focus on the most common and widely practiced form—meditation. There are many forms of meditation, as individual practices that can also be done in small or large groups. The next section will describe the various types of meditation.

Types of Meditation

Different types of meditation practices have grown over time in various wisdom traditions. While there may be many differences, they all seem to have a few things in common. They all claim a deeper mind–body connection that what is normally understood. They all target the mind in ways that help create salubrious impacts for both the mind and body. These impacts may be different in terms of intensity and scope. Some of them are strongly connected with religious traditions whereas others are more secular in nature. Many of them involve some external artifact or accessory to support the process of meditation and intonations of specific words or phrases in an explicit or subtle manner.

This study will focus on the three major groups of meditation practices, which are focused attention, open monitoring, and automatic self-transcending. This classification is based on both the way the different meditations are practiced and based on the neurological patterns of the brain as seen in brain mapping studies that have been conducted for different types of meditations (Travis & Shear, 2010).

Focused Attention

In focused attention meditation, the emphasis is on concentration. Sustained attention is focused on a specific object, and if the mind wanders then attention is brought back to the object of attention (Cahn & Polich, 2006; Raffone & Srinivasan, 2009). The meditator is in control of the focus of attention. Loving-kindness-compassion in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is a type of the focused attention meditation.

Open Monitoring

Open monitoring also called mindfulness-based meditations, involves directing attention to an ongoing experience, in a way that the meditator becomes reflectively aware of the nature and the pattern of emotions and thoughts that the meditator is feeling at that point in time (Raffone & Srinivasan, 2009). Open monitoring practices do not place any judgment on feelings, sense perceptions, and emotions. They need the meditator to be in the present moment with openness to all thoughts, sense perceptions, and emotions and involves a higher-order meta-awareness of ongoing mental processes (Cahn & Polich, 2006). Some of the examples of Open Monitoring or Mindfulness meditations are Vipassana Meditation (Buddhist Meditation), Zen meditation (Zazen: Buddhist tradition), Sahaja Meditation (Vedic tradition), and Sahaja Samadhi Meditation (Vedic tradition).

Automatic Self-Transcending

In both the focused attention and the open monitoring forms of the meditation practice, the meditator is actively focusing on doing something and is in control of the activity. The degrees of focus and voluntary direction of action may be different in the two forms but are both present. The third form of meditation practice; automatic self-transcending does not involve any focus or individual control or effort. Automatic self-transcending practices involve the transcending of the technique of the meditation itself. With the absence of a directed cognitive control that increases mental activity, self-transcending procedures would need minimal cognitive control and be automatic or effortless (Travis & Shear, 2010).

V-Theory of Transcendence

The V-theory of Transcendence as described in Fig. 4.4 is a very useful framework to understand the differences between the three groups of meditation practices in terms of their impact (Maheshwari, 2021).

The surface reality indicates the surface-level thoughts and mental activities. Any cognition, effort, control, or attention keeps the mind at the surface level. This is largely representative of focused attention and open monitoring where focus, attention, and control take primacy. However, in the case of automatic self-transcending, when there is no focus, attention, or control needed, the awareness settles to deeper and subtler levels of thought and the meditator can transcend to pure consciousness at the bottom of the V. This is called the inward stroke. During transcending, thoughts get more fleeting until they disappear completely. Awareness stays at that level of consciousness for a certain duration and absorbs pure order and coherence, and then returns to the surface-level reality. That is called the outward stroke. One may experience greater oneness, alertness, energy, clarity, enthusiasm, and creativity upon returning to the surface reality or waking mode (So & Orme-Johnson, 2001).

As shown in Fig. 4.5. This chapter will explore the role of meditation as a personal practice of oneness on the extent of oneness it creates and the

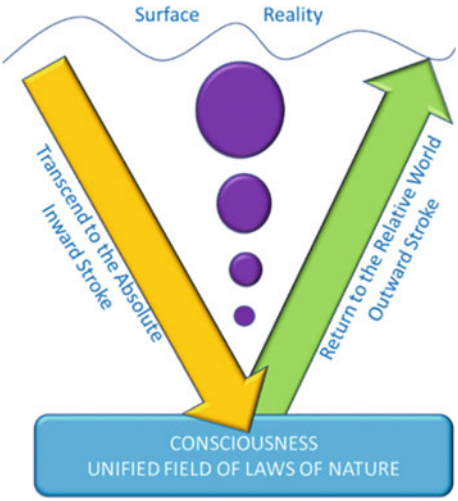


Fig. 4.4 V-theory: a 2-step model of transcendence (*Source* Maheshwari, 2021)

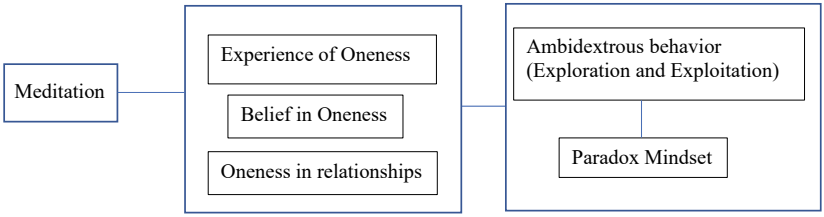


Fig. 4.5 Meditation, oneness, Paradox Mindset (PM), and Individual Ambidexterity (IA)

role of the sense of oneness in the development of PM and ambidextrous behavior.

Even though the study is primarily to explore the role of oneness practices like meditation on a sense of oneness and in turn on paradoxical mindset and ambidextrous behavior, it is important to recognize that ambidexterity is a strategic concept and culture is known to have deep impacts on strategy. The next section explores culture in a brief manner.

Culture

Culture is defined as the unwritten rules of individual and social practices in a group of people. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one group or category from the others (Hofstede et al., 2010). Culture could be characterized at various levels: national level, regional level, and so on. Culture ascribes certain practices of performance and interaction by gender, generation, social class, educational level, economic level, organizational level of leadership, etc. There are several dimensions to culture. Individualism vs. Collectivism is a primary differentiator between cultures. Tolerance of uncertainty is another dimension, which may be closely aligned with how to deal with paradoxical situations. Power distance between seniors and juniors in a community also varies by cultures. Finally, masculine/feminine dimension of cultural difference relates to an aggressive behavioral orientation version of nurturing and tolerant behavior. Pandey and Sharma (2009) showed that the four key national cultural dimensions: power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance are also instrumental at an organizational level to impact exploratory and exploitative innovation. For example, exploratory innovation is seen to be much more

encouraged in the USA as compared to Japan which has been quite successful in exploitative innovation. This difference can be attributed directly to the differentials in institutions and policy support to the type of innovation Lundvell (1990).

Research Model

This study explores the following three research questions.

Research Question 1 (RQ1):	Do those who practice meditation have a higher sense oneness
Research Question 2 (RQ2):	Do those who have a higher sense of oneness in turn have a higher paradoxical mindset and exhibit higher ambidextrous behavior?
Research Question 3 (RQ3):	How is Culture related with paradoxical mindset and ambidextrous behavior?

Based on prior literature review one can posit that meditation practices develop a sense of oneness in individuals. The measures of oneness: experience, belief, and relation, are expected to be positively correlated to the development of a PM and IA. In addition, the country or region as a cultural dimension will impact paradoxical mindset and ambidextrous behavior. The complete research model is shown in Fig. 4.6.

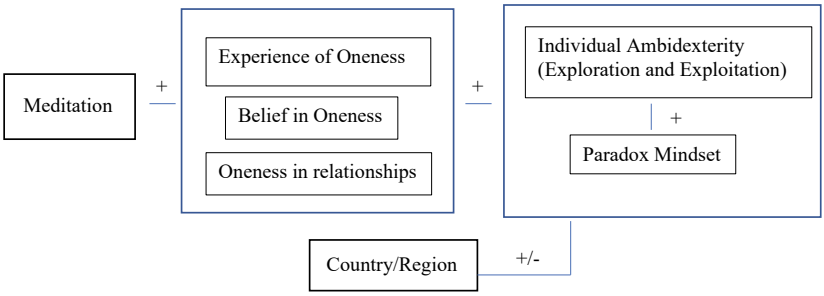


Fig. 4.6 Hypothesis model

Hypothesis 1: Those who practice meditation have a higher sense of oneness expressed in one or two or all three manifestations of oneness measured as (a) experience of oneness, (b) belief in oneness, and (c) oneness in relationships.

Hypothesis 2a: Experience of Oneness as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to a paradoxical mindset.

Hypothesis 2b: Cognition of Oneness as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to a paradoxical mindset.

Hypothesis 2c: Oneness in relationships as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to a paradoxical mindset.

Hypothesis 3a: Experience of Oneness as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to Ambidextrous behavior.

Hypothesis 3b: Cognition of Oneness as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to Ambidextrous behavior.

Hypothesis 3c: Oneness in relationships as a Measure of oneness is positively correlated to Ambidextrous behavior.

Hypothesis 4: Paradoxical mindset is positively correlated to Ambidextrous behavior.

Hypothesis 5: Culture is related to a Paradoxical mindset (PM).

Hypothesis 6: Culture is related to Individual Ambidexterity (IA).

Method

An online survey was designed for this exploratory empirical study. It contained questions about Meditation, the Sense of Oneness as measured by the Experience of Oneness (HSQ), Belief in Oneness (BIO), and Oneness in Relationship (IOS), Paradox Mindset (PM), and Culture with Individual Ambidexterity (IA). The survey instrument incorporated previously used instruments for each construct. A Google form-based questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. A convenience sample strategy was adopted, and the form was sent out to friends and family and a total of 145 responses were collected. Data was collected over a two-week period. Complete anonymity was maintained with respect to the responses. Of the 145 responses 2 were discarded on account of incomplete demographic data.

Measurement Instruments

The questionnaire was made up of seven sections. Section "Introduction" addressed the demographics and here data was collected for age, gender, type of work, position in organization, education levels, and country. Demographics especially country helped explore the relationship of culture with paradoxical mindset and ambidextrous behavior.

Section "Ambidexterity" addressed the type of practices that the respondents pursued. The study was primarily focused on exploring the impact of meditation on paradoxical mindset and Ambidextrous behavior; however, the questions in this section asked the participants to respond to all types of practices that they would consider as personal self-development practices. This section also asked for information about the frequency (number of times a week) and duration (over how many years) of practice.

Scales of Oneness

Sections "Practices of Oneness"–"Research Model" explored the Oneness construct in three ways (i) Experience of Oneness, (ii) Cognition of Oneness, and (iii) Oneness in relationships.

Experience of Oneness. A five-item instrument "Higher States of Consciousness" (HSQ) developed by Sawhney (2012) was used. The instrument has a 4-point response scale in the form of almost never (1), sometimes, often, and almost always (4). The HSQ scale consists of five items to assess how frequently respondents self-report their experience of higher states of consciousness. Experience of higher states of consciousness can be understood as the experience of Oneness. These items are primarily based on the State of Consciousness scale (SCI-scale) developed by Alexander et al., (1987) and later modified by Cranson et al. (1991) and the Daily Spiritual Experience scale (DSES-scale) developed by Underwood (2011). There is no published information on the reliability and the validity of the SCI scale; however, previous studies that have used modified versions of this scale have shown that frequency of such experiences is correlated with higher performance, higher moral development, and greater integration of the functioning of the brain (Harung et al., 2009). The daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) has been used in over 70 published studies examining spirituality experiences and psychological well-being, anxiety, and depression.

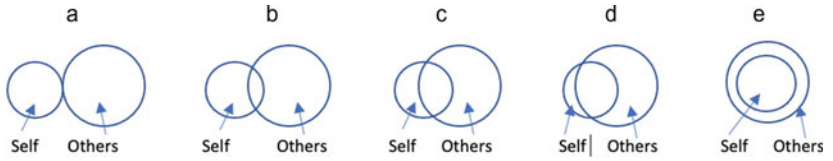


Fig. 4.7 Pictorial measure of closeness of relationships

Cognition of Oneness. The Belief in Oneness (BIO) scale was used for Cognition of Oneness. Diebels and Leary (2019) created this scale to assess the respondent's belief in the fundamental oneness of *everything*, *of all living things, and of humanity*. The belief is associated with understanding in which everything is perceived to be one, with spiritual belief. This scale correlates well with Mystical Experiences Scale (Hood, 1975), the Sources of Spirituality (SOS) Scale (Davis et al., 2015), the Metapersonal Self Scale (Decicco & Stroink, 2007), Allo-inclusive Identity Scale (Leary et al., 2008), Connectedness with Nature Scale (CNS; Mayer & Frantz, 2004), and the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (STS)—Universality subscale (Piedmont, 1999). The BIO scale has a high inter-item reliability with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.94 for all three beliefs in Oneness (everything, of all living things, and of humanity). The scale has a five-point Likert scale anchored in strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5).

Oneness in relationships. The Inclusion of Others in Self (IOS) scale was used to measure "Oneness in Relationships". The Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) Scale is a single-item, pictorial measure of closeness (Aron et al., 1992). The IOS scale has demonstrated alternate-form and test–retest reliability; convergent validity with the Relationship Closeness Inventory (E. Berscheid et al., 1989), the R. J. Sternberg (1997) Intimacy Scale among other measures. The pictorial measure serves as a Likert measure as shown in Fig. 4.7. Anchored in. A (1), B, C, D, E (5).

Paradox Mindset Scale

Section "Method" of the questionnaire measured PM using the PM scale from Miron-Spektor et al. (2018). The PM scale is a 9-item scale with responses as a five-point Likert scale anchored in Strongly disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (5). The PM scale has good reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80. Items for the PM scale were generated deductively from reviewing paradox theory (Smith & Lewis, 2011) as well as related scales.

Given the newness and uniqueness of this scale, content validity was established by a panel of experts including four leading scholars familiar with methods of scale development as well as paradox theory.

Ambidextrous Behavior

In section "Data Analysis and Results" of the instrument, IA was measured using the exploration and exploitation scale (Mom et al., 2009). The instrument has 14 items, seven each measure exploration and exploitation activities and the responses are in the form of a five-point Likert scale anchored in Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (5). The reliability of the exploration scale, as represented by Cronbach's alpha, is 0.86 and the Cronbach's alpha for the exploitation scale is 0.81. The score for the exploration and exploitation scales was added to give the IA score.

Data Analysis and Results

To explore the relationship between meditation, oneness, PM, and culture with IA, different levels of analysis in the form of descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple linear regression, MANOVA, and ANOVA were carried out using IBM SPSS. Of the 145 responses collected using a Google form-based questionnaire, 2 were discarded on account of incomplete demographic data. To identify and eliminate outliers' preliminary regression analysis was carried out to calculate Cook's distance and studentized residual. Cook's distance was less than 1 and none of the cases had a studentized residual greater than 3 indicating no influential outliers.

Descriptive Statistics

Of the 143 respondents, 53 indicated that meditation was the most impactful self-development practice, and for the study, they will be referred to as "meditators". The rest 90 will be referred to as "non-meditators", some of these had indicated that they did practice meditation but did not indicate meditation as their most impactful practice. The question that inquired about the type of meditation has a wide range of answers and each group was too small for any meaningful statistical analysis. Of the respondents, 93 indicated gender as male and 49 indicated gender as female. From an age perspective, 12.6% were less than 40 years

Table 4.2 Demographic summary of respondents

Meditation	Meditators	53	37.1%
	Non-meditators	90	62.9%
Gender	Male	93	65%
	Female	50	35%
Culture	East	81	56.6%
	West	62	43.4%
Age	Less than 40 years	18	12.6%
	41–50 years old	46	32.2%
	51–60 years old	64	44.8%
	More than 61 years	15	10.5%

Table 4.3 Descriptive statistics for oneness measures, PM and IA

	N	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Skewness*	*Kurtosis*
HSQ	143	2.477	0.736	0.272	−0.408
BIO	143	3.785	1.016	−0.614	−0.218
IOS	143	3.212	1.041	−0.101	−0.417
PM	143	3.484	0.777	−0.444	0.249
IA	143	6.729	1.485	−0.282	0.687

old, 32.2% were between 41 and 50 years old, 44.8% were between 51 and 60 years old, and 10.5% were more than 61 years old. The nation of residence was considered a proxy measure of culture. Respondents from India and other Asian countries were coded as "East" and accounted for 56.6% of the respondents, while respondents from the USA, Canada, and the UK were coded as "West" and accounted for 43.4 of the respondents. These demographic details are summarized in Table 4.2.

Descriptive statistics for Measures of Oneness, PM, and IA are shown in Table 4.3.

Scale Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha for each of the scales is shown in Table 4.4. IA is measured using two sub scales of exploration and exploitation and separate Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the subscales. All the Cronbach's alpha were high enough to demonstrate adequate instrument reliability.

Table 4.4 Reliability statistics (Cronbach's alpha)

Scale	*Cronbach's alpha*	*No. of items in the scale*
HSQ	0.854	5
BIO	0.947	6
IOS	0.866	3
PM	0.909	9
Exploration	0.896	7
Exploitation	0.877	7

Table 4.5 Correlation Matrix for all variables

	Meditation	*HSQ*	*BIO*	*IOS*	*PM*	*IA*	*Culture*
Meditation							
HSQ	**0.338****						
BIO	**0.256****	0.411**					
IOS	**0.206***	0.388**	0.172*				
PM	−0.006	**0.286****	**0.321****	**0.167***			
IA	0.083	**0.164***	**0.282****	**0.327****	**0.332****		
Culture	0.001	−0.134	0.006	−0.047	−0.027	0.269**	

$N = 143$; $^{**}p < 0.01$ level; $^{*}p < 0.05$ level

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was carried out and the results are detailed in Table 4.5. Meditation is positively correlated with all the measures of oneness (HSQ, BIO, and IOS) and all these relationships are statistically significant. Experience of Oneness (HSQ) is not significantly related to PM and IA. Belief in Oneness (BIO) is significantly related to both PM and IA. Oneness in Relationships (IOS) is significantly related to both PM and IA. PM is significantly related to IA. Culture is significantly related with IA, however, Culture is not significantly related to PM.

Linear Regression

To explore the variance in IA based on the combined effect of Meditation, Oneness measures, PM and Culture multiple linear regression was carried out. Results of the multiple liner regression are show in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Results of multiple liner regression predicting IA

	Unstandardized coefficients		*Standardized coefficients*			
Model term	*B*	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	*t*	*Sig*	*VIF*
(Constant)	1.845	0.717		2.574	0.011	
Others 1 Med 2	−0.005	0.241	−0.001	−0.019	0.985	1.190
HSQ	−0.106	0.180	−0.052	−0.588	0.558	1.526
BIO	0.251	0.121	0.172	**2.077**	**0.040**	1.315
IOS	0.414	0.112	0.290	**3.683**	**<0.001**	1.193
PM	0.479	0.150	0.251	**3.193**	**0.002**	1.186
East 1 West 2	0.840	0.218	0.281	**3.855**	**<0.001**	1.025

Regression results indicated a statistically significant model that predicts IA with $R^2 = 0.293$, $R^2_{adj} = 0.262$, $F\ (6{,}136) = 9.414$, $p < 0.001$. As shown in Table 4.6 Belief in Oneness (BIO) ($t\ (136) = 2.077$, $p = 0.04$), Oneness in Relationships (IOS) ($t\ (136) = 3.683$, $p < 0.001$), PM ($t\ (136) = 3.193$, $p = 0.002$) and Culture ($t\ (136) = 3.855$, $p < 0.001$) were each statistically significant linear predictors for IA. Thus hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c are supported.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance

In addition, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to analyze the overall difference in sense of oneness as measured by all the 3 measures for meditators and non-meditators. MANOVA showed a highly significant ($p < 0.001$**) overall difference in the sense of oneness between the meditators and no meditators. As a result of this Hypothesis 1 is supported. The MANOVA results are shown below in Table 4.7. Further, the univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results (Table 4.7) showed that Experience of Oneness HSQ ($p < 0.001$), Belief in Oneness BIO ($p = 0.002$), and Oneness in Relationships IOS ($p = 0.042$) were all statistically significant. This further substantiates hypothesis 1a. 1b and 1c can be supported.

Table 4.7 MANOVA and ANOVA results for predicting measures of oneness using meditation

		Meditators (N = 53)		*Non-meditators N = 90*				
Dependent variable	*Hypothesis*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*F-value*	*p-value*	*Partial eta squared*
MANOVA	H1					**7.341**	**<0.001**	0.137
ANOVA								
HSQ	H1a	2.800	0.743	2.287	0.6637	**18.161**	**<0.001**	0.114
BIO	H1b	4.122	0.866	3.587	1.049	**9.851**	**0.002**	0.065
IOS	H1c	3.490	1.133	3.048	0.951	**6.247**	**0.014**	0.042

Discussion and Conclusion

This study found that the sense of oneness was higher for meditators, for all three measures of oneness. It was also found that a sense of oneness as measured by all the three measures was significantly related to both PM and IA. Those with a higher sense of oneness had higher PM and higher IA. This suggests a discovery of a connection between practices of developing oneness such as meditation and constructs like PM and IA which are considered as critical factors for managers and leaders in today's business environment. Meditation itself was not directly related to PM or IA, but that relationship was meditated by the concept of oneness (in all three measures).

Culture was found to be directly related to IA, but had no influence on Paradoxical Mindset. Western culture (the US, Canada, and Europe) respondents showed higher levels of IA as compared to their Eastern culture respondents. This may be explained by the fact that Western culture has a lower power distance as compared to Eastern culture (Hofstede et al., 2010) and lower power distance index is conducive to higher IA (Pelagio Rodriguez & Hechanova, 2014). It is important to note that culture was not significantly related to any other measures of oneness or to meditation even though it could be argued that meditation and the sense of oneness have their roots in Eastern wisdom traditions.

The multiple linear regression showed that the model explained 29.3% variance in IA ($F(6,136) = 9.414$ $p < 0.001$), using meditation, three measures of oneness, PM, and culture as independent predictors. In terms of individual predictors two of the three Oneness measures; Belief in Oneness and Oneness in relationships along with PM and Culture were significant predictors of IA. The importance of oneness in relationships as a predictor of IA in in line with prior research where managers who have a high degree of workplace social support and have higher levels of IA (Levinthal & March, 1993; March, 1991). In addition, a high level of trust can actually help managers becoming more ambidextrous (Adler et al., 1999). Both workplace social support and trust are indictors of strong relationships and may explain the relationship between oneness in relationships and IA.

IA and paradoxical mindset at all levels within the organization are increasingly seen as the critical factor that leads to organizational success (Raisch et al., 2009; Tarba et al., 2020). While IA has many antecedents from an organizational characteristics, this study showed the influence of oneness and self-development practices like meditation. This study responds to the research directions of going deeper within the individuals to explore why some and more ambidextrous than others (Tarba et al., 2020). The study also identifies an age-old technique like meditation that could provide the necessary foundations for developing ambidextrous capabilities in an individual.

References

Adler, P. S., Goldoftas, B., & Levine, D. I. (1999). Flexibility versus efficiency? A case study of model changeovers in the Toyota production system. *Organization Science, 10*(1), 43–68. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.10.1.43

Alexander, C. N., Cranson, R. W., Boyer, R. W., & Orme-Johnson, D. W. (1987). Transcendental consciousness: A fourth state of consciousness beyond sleep, dreaming, and waking. In *Sleep and dreams: A sourcebook* (pp. 282–315). Garland Publishing.

Andriopoulos, C., & Lewis, M. W. (2009). Exploitation-exploration tensions and organizational ambidexterity: Managing paradoxes of innovation. *Organization Science, 20*(4), 696–717. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0406

Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*(4), 596–612. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.63.4.596

Benner, M. J., & Tushman, M. (2002). Process management and technological innovation: A longitudinal study of the photography and paint industries. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 47*(4), 676–707. https://doi.org/10.2307/3094913

Benner, M. J., & Tushman, M. L. (2003). Exploitation, exploration, and process management: the productivity dilemma revisited. *Academy of Management Review, 28*(2), 238–256. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2003.9416096

Birkinshaw, J., & Gibson, C. (2004). Building Ambidexterity into an organization. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 45*(4), 47–55.

Bohm, D. (2002). *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. Routledge.

Brunner DJ, Staats BR, Tushman M, Upton DM (2010) Wellsprings of creation: How perturbation sustains exploration in mature organizations. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1420900

Capra, F. (1975). The Tao of physics: An exploration of the parallels between modern physics and eastern mysticism. Distributed in the U.S. by Random House, https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/999483767602121

Chen, M.-J. (2002). Transcending paradox: The chinese "Middle Way" perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *19*(2), 179–199. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016235517735

Choi, I., Koo, M., & Choi, J. A. (2007). Individual differences in analytic versus holistic thinking. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*(5), 691–705. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206298568

Christensen, C. M. (2013). *The innovator's dilemma: When new technologies cause great firms to fail*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Collins, J. C., & Porras, J. I. (1994). *Built to last: Successful habits of visionary companies* (1st ed.). HarperBusiness.

Cranson, R. W., Orme-Johnson, D. W., Gackenbach, J., Dillbeck, M. C., Jones, C. H., & Alexander, C. N. (1991). Transcendental meditation and improved performance on intelligence-related measures: A longitudinal study. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *12*(10), 1105–1116. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(91)90040-I

Danneels, E. (2008). Organizational antecedents of second-order competences. *Strategic Management Journal, 29*, 519–543. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.684

Davis, D. E., Rice, K., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., DeBlaere, C., Choe, E., & Worthington Jr, E. L. (2015). Development of the sources of spirituality scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *62*(3), 503.

Denison, D. R., Hooijberg, R., & Quinn, R. E. (1995). Paradox and performance: Toward a theory of behavioral complexity in managerial leadership. *Organization Science, 6*(5), 524–540. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.6.5.524

Dickens, C. (1949). *A tale of two cities [1859]*. Gawthorn.

Diebels, K. J., & Leary, M. R. (2019). The psychological implications of believing that everything is one. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *14*(4), 463–473. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2018.1484939

D'Souza, D. E., Sigdyal, P., & Struckell, E. (2017). Relative ambidexterity: A measure and a versatile framework. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 31*(2), 124–136. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2016.0020

Fourné, S. P. L. (2014). *Managing organizational tensions a multi-level perspective on exploration, exploitation and Ambidexterity*. ERIM. http://hdl.handle.net/1765/76075

Gersick, C. J. G. (1988). Time and transition in work teams: Toward a new model of group development. *Academy of Management Journal, 31*(1), 9–41. https://doi.org/10.5465/256496

Gibson, C. B., & Birkinshaw, J. (2004). The antecedents, consequences, and mediating role of organizational ambidexterity. *Academy of Management Journal, 19*.

Good, D., & Michel, EricJ. (2013). Individual ambidexterity: exploring and exploiting in dynamic contexts. *The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 147*(5), 435–453.

Harung, H. S. (2018). *World-class brain*.

Harung, H. S., & Travis, F. (2016). *Excellence through mind-brain development: The secrets of world-class performers*. Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315581392

Harung, H., Travis, F., Blank, W., & Heaton, D. (2009). Higher development, brain integration, and excellence in leadership. *Management Decision*, *47*(6), 872–894. https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740910966631

He, Z.-L., & Wong, P.-K. (2004). Exploration vs. exploitation: An empirical test of the ambidexterity hypothesis. *Organization Science, 15*(4), 481–494. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1040.0078

Hofstede, G. H., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind: Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Hood Jr, R. W. (1975). The construction and preliminary validation of a measure of reported mystical experience. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 29–41.

Jansen, J. J. P., Van Den Bosch, F. A. J., & Volberda, H. W. (2005). Managing potential and realized absorptive capacity: How do organizational antecedents matter? *Academy of Management Journal, 48*(6), 999–1015. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2005.19573106

Johnson, B. (1993). Polarity management. *Executive Development, 6*(2), EUM0000000003846. https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000003846

Kaulio, M., Thorén, K., & Rohrbeck, R. (2017). Double ambidexterity: How a Telco incumbent used business-model and technology innovations to

successfully respond to three major disruptions. *Creativity and Innovation Management, 26*(4), 339–352. https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12246

Kauppila, O.-P. (2018). How does it feel and how does it look? The role of employee motivation in organizational learning type. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 39*(8), 941–955. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2270

Laureiro-Martínez, D., Brusoni, S., Canessa, N., & Zollo, M. (2015). Understanding the exploration-exploitation dilemma: An fMRI study of attention control and decision-making performance: Understanding the exploration-exploitation dilemma. *Strategic Management Journal*, *36*(3), 319–338. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2221

Levinthal, D. A., & March, J. G. (1993). The myopia of learning. *Strategic Management Journal, 14*(S2), 95–112. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250141009

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91. https://doi.org/10.51327/CRNG6977

March, J. G. (1991). Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. *Organization Science, 2*(1), 71–87. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2.1.71

Miron-Spektor, E., Ingram, A., Keller, J., Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2018). Microfoundations of organizational paradox: The problem is how we think about the problem. *Academy of Management Journal, 61*(1), 26–45. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.0594

Mom, T. J. M., Fourné, S. P. L., & Jansen, J. J. P. (2015). Managers' work experience, ambidexterity, and performance: The contingency role of the work context. *Human Resource Management, 54*(S1), s133–s153. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21663

Mom, T. J. M., Van Den Bosch, F. A. J., & Volberda, H. W. (2007). Investigating managers' exploration and exploitation activities: The influence of top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal knowledge inflows. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(6), 910–931. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00697.x

Mom, T. J. M., van den Bosch, F. A. J., & Volberda, H. W. (2009). Understanding variation in managers' ambidexterity: Investigating direct and interaction effects of formal structural and personal coordination mechanisms. *Organization Science, 20*(4), 812–828. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0427

O'Reilly, C. A., Caldwell, D. F., Chatman, J. A., Lapiz, M., & Self, W. (2010). How leadership matters: The effects of leaders' alignment on strategy implementation. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(1), 104–113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.10.008

O'Reilly, C. A., & Tushman, M. L. (2004). The ambidexterous organization. *Harvard Business Review, 82*(4), 74–81.

O'Reilly, C. A., & Tushman, M. L. (2013). Organizational ambidexterity: Past, present, and future. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *27*(4), 324–338. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2013.0025

Ossenbrink, J., Hoppmann, J., & Hoffmann, V. H. (2019). Hybrid ambidexterity: How the environment shapes incumbents' use of structural and contextual approaches. *Organization Science, 30*(6), 1319–1348. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2019.1286

Pandey, S., & Sharma, R. (2009). Organizational factors for exploration and exploitation. *Journal of Technology Management & Innovation*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-27242009000100005

Pavlovich, K. (2020). Quantum empathy: An alternative narrative for global transcendence. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, *17*(4), 333–347. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2019.1706626

Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. E. (1999). Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction. *American Psychologist*, *54*(9), 741.

Pelagio Rodriguez, R., & Hechanova, M., Regina M. (2014). A study of culture dimensions, organizational ambidexterity, and perceived innovation in teams. *Journal of Technology Management & Innovation*, *9*(3), 21–33. https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-27242014000300002

Phillips, J. M., & Gully, S. M. (1997). Role of goal orientation, ability, need for achievement, and locus of control in the self-efficacy and goal—Setting process. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *82*(5), 792.

Poole, M. S., & Van de Ven, A. H. (1989). Using paradox to build management and organization theories. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 562–578. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308389

Probst, G., Raisch, S., & Tushman, M. L. (2011). Ambidextrous leadership. *Organizational Dynamics*, *40*(4), 326–334. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2011.07.010

Raffone, A., & Srinivasan, N. (2009). An adaptive workspace hypothesis about the neural correlates of consciousness: Insights from neuroscience and meditation studies. *Progress in Brain Research*, *176*, 161–180.

Raisch, S., Birkinshaw, J., Probst, G., & Tushman, M. L. (2009). Organizational ambidexterity: Balancing exploitation and exploration for sustained performance. *Organization Science, 20*(4), 685–695. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0428

Rivkin, J. W., & Siggelkow, N. (2003). Balancing search and stability: Interdependencies among elements of organizational design. *Management Science, 49*(3), 290–311. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.49.3.290.12740

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*(1), 141–166. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.141

Sawhney, S. (2012). *Effects of the TM technique on anxiety, emotional intelligence and trust:* 302.

Schad, J., Lewis, M. W., Raisch, S., & Smith, W. K. (2016). Paradox research in management science: Looking back to move forward. *Academy of Management Annals, 10*(1), 5–64. https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2016.1162422

Schrodinger, E. (1956). What is Life? *What Is Life*.

Sheremata, W. A. (2000). Centrifugal and centripetal forces in radical new product development under time pressure. *Academy of Management Review, 21*.

Smith, W. K., & Tushman, M. L. (2005). Managing strategic contradictions: A top management model for managing innovation streams. *Organization Science, 16*(5), 522–536. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1050.0134

Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2011). Toward a theory of paradox: A dynamic equilibrium model of organizing. *Academy of Management Review*, *23*.

So, K.-T., & Orme-Johnson, D. W. (2001). Three randomized experiments on the longitudinal effects of the transcendental meditation technique on cognition. *Intelligence*, *29*(5), 419–440.

Sternberg, R. J. (1997). Construct validation of a triangular love scale. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *27*(3), 313–335. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199705)27:3<313::AID-EJSP824>3.0.CO;2-4

Tarba, S. Y., Jansen, J. J. P., Mom, T. J. M., Raisch, S., & Lawton, T. C. (2020). A microfoundational perspective of organizational ambidexterity: Critical review and research directions. *Long Range Planning*, *53*(6), 102048. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2020.102048

Taylor, A., & Helfat, C. E. (2009). Organizational linkages for surviving technological change: Complementary assets, middle management, and ambidexterity. *Organization Science, 20*(4), 718–739. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0429

Travis, F., & Shear, J. (2010). Focused attention, open monitoring and automatic self-transcending: Categories to organize meditations from Vedic, Buddhist and Chinese traditions. *Consciousness and Cognition, 19*(4), 1110–1118. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2010.01.007

Tsao, F. C., & Laszlo, C. (2019). *Quantum leadership: New consciousness in business*. Stanford Business Books, an imprint of Stanford University Press.

Tushman, M. L., & O'Reilly III, C. A. (1996). Ambidexterous organizations: Managing evolutionary and revolutionary change. *California Management Review, 38*(4), 8–30. https://doi.org/10.2307/41165852

Underwood, L. G. (2011). The daily spiritual experience scale: Overview and results. *Religions, 2*(1), 29–50. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2010029

Volberda, H. W. (1999). Building the flexible firm. *Oxford University Press*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198295952.001.0001

Wilber, K. (2005). Introduction to integral theory and practice. *AQAL*, *1*(1), 38.

Zhang, Y., Waldman, D. A., Han, Y.-L., & Li, X.-B. (2015). Paradoxical leader behaviors in people management: Antecedents and consequences. *Academy of Management Journal*, *58*(2), 538–566. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0995

CHAPTER 5

Development of Consciousness-Based Leadership from Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras

Rajshekar Krishnan, Reetika Jain, and Anil K. Maheshwari

Contemporary Models of Leadership Development and Education

The world has changed; human beings have steadily evolved towards higher states of consciousness, but companies have not kept pace (Laszlo et al., 2021; Sisodia, 2009). As a result, there is a lack of effective leadership running these institutions. Therefore, there is a need to develop and

R. Krishnan (✉)
Wayda Consultants, Bangalore, India
e-mail: raj@waydaconsultants.com

R. Jain
Delhi University, Delhi, India

A. K. Maheshwari
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_5

educate and produce more leaders at a greater pace in order to reduce and even prevent stumbling from one crisis to the next (Harari, 2018). The world needs the right changes in the environment such that it nourishes both intellect and inner transformation of the soul. Such a higher consciousness-based environment would lead to wealth creation for all human beings (Bozesan, 2009).

Van Wart (2008) classifies the current methods of leadership development into three broad categories: self-study, structured learning experiences and formal training and development programmes. Self-study is argued to be the heart of leadership development. Ross (2013) has labelled self-study as self-driven leadership development. Van Wart (2008) says, "without self-study-which is to say self-recognition of issues and skills of leadership, no leadership development can occur." It requires raising one's consciousness and self-awareness before, during and after leadership episodes. Self-study is initiated and driven by the individual. It comprises a range of activities, such as self-recognition, self-direction, self-support, self-perception, self-efficacy, self-achievement and self-inspiration, which can all be executed both independently and in any of the collective configuration. The effectiveness of self-driven leadership development stems from the simultaneous creation of constructive thought patterns and the elimination of dysfunctional thought patterns (Van Wart, 2008). Other individual-driven methods for improving the quality of consciousness are meditation practices (Gunaratne, 2011; Maheshwari, 2021) as well as *kriya yoga* exemplified by the practice of *asanas* and *pranayama* (Iyengar, 2012).

Structured learning experiences provide a systematic method of accelerating the leadership development and sustaining a flowing pipeline of good leaders. It can potentially supply ample leadership talent to sustain the growth and expansion of the organisations. Structured learning experiences for leadership development are based on two premises: first, that experience, if reflected upon, will prove to be a powerful teacher (Kolb, 2014); and second, that leaders prefer action-centred learning to classroom learning (Argyris & Schön, 1997). Job rotation, challenging assignments, action learning, learning from one's superior, coaching and mentoring, counselling, action learning, developmental opportunities, as well as meta-challenges involving ongoing learning as well as adaptive learning are some examples of structured learning (Bass, 2008). On the flip side, the persistent inability to deal with VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) situations and the inability to generate trust

and confidence in stakeholders, shows the limits to this approach. A more flexible and adaptive leadership has been suggested by Glover et al. (2002) who propose that a high degree of both assimilation (by making sense of the external world) and accommodation (undergoing internal changes to the structure of one's beliefs, ideas and attitudes) are required for adaptive leadership. And, of these two factors, assimilation and accommodation, the latter is more likely to be the Achilles heel of current leadership! Structured learning experiences thus, perhaps, fall short of creating truly flexible and adaptive leaders.

Formal training and development programmes have been a bedrock of corporate efforts at leadership development (Bass, 2008). A broad set of techniques such as lectures, group discussions, role-playing, role reversals, sensitivity training, assessment and development centres and training in leadership styles are utilised as part of formal management and executive development programmes (Bass, 2008). These techniques have played a significant role in the leadership development in the past. Despite a decline in popularity on account of the requirement of interactions in a classroom as a medium in a pandemic and work-from-home situation, these could make a comeback in a digital avatar. The strength of these methods is that they deliver a regular supply of leadership talent for stable business operations. However, these methods, too, have the weakness that they do not really prepare leaders with agility to deal with the VUCA world.

Snook et al. (2012) offer a framework of leadership development called Knowing, Doing and Being. Conger (1992) offers a four Key Approach viz. (1) personal growth, (2) conceptual analysis, (3) skill development and (4) feedback. Both of these frameworks have much in common as they include all three traditional domains of psychology viz. cognitive (knowing/conceptual analysis), behavioural (doing/skill development) and affective/attitudinal (being/personal growth). Tables 5.1 and 5.2 summarise the constructive takeaways in the above two frameworks:

Further, Table 5.3 presented is a novel framework for Being,

The techniques of leadership development in the Being framework (Table 5.3) aim to enhance the soft quality of leadership through an intangible internal process of development and consequently may be very demanding in contrast with the first two frameworks viz. Cognitive (Table 5.1) and Doing (Table 5.2). However, Allen and Martin (2012) observe that self-study and personal growth are not emphasised in the current curricula of leadership development to the extent they ought to be.

Table 5.1 Framework of leadership development: knowing/conceptual analysis/cognitive

Approach	*Purpose*	*Constructive takeaways*
Sense-making	Supports environmental assessment	Handling Meta-challenges through Adaptive Learning
Case study	Understanding complex and realistic situations	A case study should help prevent history from repeating itself
Leadership Literature	Contemplation of great leadership literature from classical to contemporary	Recognition of recurrent/perennial leadership paradigms
Leadership Templating	Imbibing a set of leadership principles generic and yet specific	Retention in the active memory of leaders is critical for implementation

Table 5.2 Framework of leadership development: doing/behavioural/skill development

Approach	*Purpose*	*Constructive takeaways*
Theatre	Developing leadership presence	Centring on the current moment of communication to build an authentic relationship depends on self-knowledge of the leader
Balancing authenticity and skill	Understanding that leadership is situational, relational and non-hierarchical	Being Yourself with Skill
Self-awareness through feedback from structured learning situations	Self-assessment transferable to leadership situations	Personal growth through behavioural modification is possible only through self-awareness

There is a scope for adding methods to improve self-study (raising one's consciousness before, during and after a leadership event) and enhancing Being (self-awareness of mental and emotional states).

Table 5.3 Framework of leadership development: being/attitudinal/personal growth

Approach	*Purpose*	*Constructive takeaways*
Transformational leadership development	Increasing Self-awareness, overcoming personal blockages to demonstrate a wider repertoire of leadership behaviours	Faculty of such programmes are not just repositories of knowledge but guides, confidants and mentors while challenging the participants as well as empathising with them
Values-based leadership development	Inculcating Leadership based on helping followers realise their own needs	Faculty's role as a moderator and Socratic questioner is critical for this technique
Identity workspaces for leadership development	Helping Leaders to understand how to learn through cognitive, emotional and practical engagements	Faculty who has the competence, sensitivity and integrity to facilitate participant's inquiry into their experience

Higher States of Consciousness

To realise its full potential, the human mind should be working from a higher state of consciousness (Yogi, 1963). There are many scriptures that refer to higher states of consciousness. Given the richness of the traditions and multiple perspectives, the taxonomy systematised by Rao and Paranjpe (2016) is illuminating and comprehensive with the broad division into Transcendental and Transactional Consciousness. Indic traditions accept transcendental consciousness as the basis of underlying reality (Yogi, 1963). Table 5.4 summarises some of the wisdom approaches on this theme.

Building upon Wilber's (1993) All Quadrants All Lines (AQAL) integral approach to consciousness, Bozesan (2009) suggests that consciousness-based leaders are integral leaders, who have evolved after interior development and are engaged in the wealth creation for the benefit of all and thus help their culture, societies and environment. Pappas (2010) investigated the integral leadership of ethologist and primatologist Dr Jane Goodall. Her findings suggest that Dr. Goodall has a *spiritual essence* in the way she approaches her life and life's work. She is motivated by a *higher purpose* to be a messenger of hope and peace. There is mindfulness that leads to *compassionate action*. She goes about her work with a *quiet confidence* knowing that all she does has a purpose that is

Table 5.4 Wisdom approaches

S. No	*Scripture*	*Characteristics of persons/leaders with higher consciousness*
1	*Bhagavad Gita*	A person with the higher state of consciousness is described as *Sthithapragna*. One has given up all his desires and his mind is turned inward. The person is undisturbed by adversity, indifferent to happiness and free from fear and anger. That person can withdraw his senses and have a stabilised mind. All his suffering has been destroyed and he becomes blissful. In that blissful state, his intelligence is firmly established
2	*Ashtavakra Gita*	The qualities of a person with a higher state of consciousness are described. One is sincere, compassionate, content, happy, peaceful and unattached. One experiences its limitless nature and is equal in pain and pleasure, hope and disappointment. One is fearless in actions and silent from within
3	*Dhammapada* of Buddhism	It mentions the qualities of an awakened person. One is free from desires, passions and conditioning. The person is established in meditation and lives in freedom. Their mind is still and has reached the supreme goal of life. The individual is never angry and never causes harm to others. That person radiates love for all. They do not cling to pleasure, nor do they fear death or prison
4	*Atma Siddhi Shastra* of Jainism	It describes the qualities of a person whose consciousness is evolved, such as self-realisation, rational attitude, desire for liberation, wisdom, inner joy, harmony between speech and actions, forgiveness and freedom from all discriminations
5	The commentary by Sri Sankara on *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*	The *Buddhi*, being transparent and next to the *Atman*, catches the reflection of the intelligence of the *Atman*. Therefore, the wise men happen to identify themselves with Atman first, next comes the Manas. Thus, the *Atman* successively illuminates with its own intelligence, the entire aggregate of *Buddhi*, *Manas, Indriya* and *Deha*

greater than herself. Also, she is *relationship-oriented* in her approach to change. Thus, there are five important characteristics of integral leaders which are (a) spiritual essence, (b) motivated by a higher purpose, (c) relationship-oriented, (d) the practice of compassionate action and (e) quiet confidence. Sengupta (2021) presents a 5-level Integral leadership model. The leaders at the higher levels of integral leadership exhibit self-discipline, self-control and self-knowledge. They create a culture of

self-organisation within the organisation for organisational excellence and employee well-being. Such leaders work on the principle of *Lokasamgraha* or the welfare of all. Such leaders optimise the health and value of the interdependent system. They focus on "How can I help?" and "What can I do?" for the present state of the world (Barrett, 2006). These leaders have explicit intention to act for the benefit of all society (Ranganathananda, 2000). Such leaders develop a higher and deeper purpose for the organisation that can energise all the stakeholders. Development of consciousness is essential for discovering such a higher or deeper purpose (Arora et al., 2019; Nader & Maheshwari, 2023).

Developing Higher Consciousness Leadership

Maheshwari (2021) provides a few principles for developing higher-consciousness leaders:

1. Consciousness is primary. This principle highlights that consciousness is pure existence and is the source of all manifestation (Nader, 2021). This is the true nature of existence of every person and organisation and environment.
2. Love is all we need. All wisdom traditions highlight unconditional love for the almighty god and love for others. Also called agape, unconditional love drives people to work selflessly for humanity.
3. Unboundarise oneself. Individual needs to continually develop their own so they can see themselves as unbounded and capable of achieving anything. This will lead to manifesting their full potential.

These principles enable a process approach to action, while trusting nature to provide the right situations and results. Leadership should treat everyone as a part of one family and help each other to grow and learn.

Harung et al. (1995) made a pioneering attempt to understand whether world-class leaders experience higher states of consciousness, based on self-reports. Frequency of momentary experiences of higher states of consciousness was significantly higher in the experimental group as compared with two control groups. They suggest that by accelerating the development of consciousness, it should be possible to develop leaders who can meet the organisational challenges of the twenty-first century.

Leaders operating from higher level of consciousness would exhibit the following features (Harung et al. (1996):

1. Expanded consciousness: They are aware of their own true nature and find greater connections in all aspects of life. Such a leadership would tend to appreciate the situation from multiple perspectives and find the best action choice. They would evaluate and learn from the situation rather than judging it prematurely.
2. Being Present: A conscious leader is focused on the present only and not dwelling on the past and future. It is a precious quality of awareness cultivated over time. Such persons would also be transparent and reveal their true selves to others in every situation. With the expanded consciousness there is the activation of the intuitive mind. Such an intuition will be attuned to all the laws of nature and will attract the support of nature for its manifestation.
3. Enhanced human experience: Conscious leaders value and give importance to human experience. They understand that human experience is a complex one and respect everyone's human experience in the situation. Conscious leaders keep on questioning their intent and organisation direction and have a sense of reality. It means whatever personal values, beliefs system, the vision they have has a realistic notion.

Bhagavad Gita (BG) and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (YS) are popular guides for the development of consciousness.

Bhagavad Gita on Conscious Leadership

BG describes the mental condition of a person living with a higher state of consciousness as *sthitaprajna*, or steady in wisdom. Such a person realises his true nature as pure consciousness or *Atman*. The individual will be *atmanicatmañ tustah* that is he or she is fully delighted in the self by the Self. Swami Ranganathananda (2000) quotes Sri Ramakrishna who said "Siva dances with joy realising his own infinite nature." BG also refers to such leadership as "Raj rishi leadership" which means a person is a monk (rishi) from the inside and a king (raja) on the outside (Chakraborty, 1995). Such a person realises the interconnectedness and mutual interdependence among the species of this universe and works for the benefit of

all. Such a leader realises the philosophy of working for the welfare of the society (*lokasamgraha*) by first giving to the divine and living on what remains (*principle of yajña*).

The substratum of the universe is pure consciousness which is called *Brahman* and is described as "destruction-less, and by Which all this (universe) is pervaded; no one is capable of causing destruction to this changeless One" (BG: 2.17). "Brahman is neither born; nor ever dies; nor, having not been at one time, will This come to be again. This is unborn, destruction-less, eternal and ancient and is not slain [even] when the body is slain" (BG: 2.20). The Brahman, called the Atman also, is experienced through meditation." Some perceive the self (Atman) within the self (body) by meditation by the self (mind) others by the jnana-yoga; and others by the action-yoga" (BG: 13.24). As a result of the individual's perception of the Atman within, the following changes occur: "One becomes free from worldliness, free from the qualities of sattva and rajas and tamas, and becomes established in the higher Self" (BG: 2.45). "An individual thus poised becomes eligible to lead as he/she has the right attitude: Therefore, unattached always, one should perform action that is to be performed; for, the person, performing action without attachment, attains the Supreme" (BG: 3.19). And the raison-d'etre of leadership: "Even recognizing its necessity for the guidance of the world, you must perform action" (BG: 3.20). "Whatsoever a great man does, that the other men also do; whatever he sets up as the standard, that the world (mankind) follows" (BG: 3.21).

The foundation of all leadership development from BG is self-referral: *One should raise oneself by one's Self alone; let not one lower oneself; for the Self alone is the friend of oneself, and the Self alone is the enemy of oneself. (BG: 6.5)*. The practical outcome of all of this is: "*Wherever is the pure consciousness, I am more than convinced that good fortune, victory, happiness and righteousness will naturally follow*" *(BG: 18.78)*. The following two verses present the internal and external paradigm of a leader:

> BG:3.35 Better is one's own duty, though ill-done, than the duty of another well-performed. Better is death in one's own duty; the duty of another is fraught with fear.
>
> BG 18.14. The body, the doer, and diverse sense, and activity of various kinds, and Divine Providence, are the five factors of action.

Yoga Sutras on Development of Consciousness

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (YS) highlight the importance of *sadhana* or practice. This is the path of action or kriya. Inspiring leadership is created by sacred *sadhana* (Chakraborty, 1995). By the continuous practice of yogic techniques, a person is led towards spiritual illumination. The *Sadhak* (practitioner) learns to apply their mind and intelligence with skill, dedication and devotion. The eight-fold of kriya yoga (Ashtanga yoga) is as follows (Maheshwari, 2023):

Yama (Moral injunction)—These are the universal vows which a yoga practitioner (*sadhak*) must inculcate in his/her lifestyle. It includes wishing no harm in word, action and speech. A person must be sincere, truthful, honest, not stealing and possessing only what one needs without being greedy.

Niyama (fixed observances)—It refers to individual practices which build the practitioner's (*sadhak*) own character. It includes external and internal cleanliness. External cleanliness includes bathing of the body and internal cleanliness is maintained through the practice of postures (Asana) and pranayama.

Asana (Postures)—Each posture (asana) helps in the rhythmic functioning of the various systems of the body which affect the senses, mental and intellectual levels. By carefully observing and adjusting, each posture will bring calmness and sobriety to the mind. The practitioner (*sadhak*) learns compassion through this practice (Iyengar, 1965).

Pranayam (Regulation of breath)—Prana is an auto-energising force that provides the fundamental energy and the source of all knowledge. In pranayama, there is the regulation of breath through the right and left sides of nostrils and lungs. It involves three steps of inhalation, exhalation and retention.

Pratyahara (Internalisation of the senses)—Through pratyahara, the *sadhaka* develops willpower and detaches themselves from the sense organs and acquires clarity of thought.

Dharana (concentration)—Dharana means the focus of attention on a chosen point or area, within or outside the body.

Dhyana (Meditation)—It refers to the maintenance of an uninterrupted flow of attention on a fixed point or region without intervention or interruption. In dhyana, psychological and chronological time comes to stand still as the mind observes its own behaviour.

Samadhi (Absorption of consciousness)—When the attentive flow of consciousness merges with the object of meditation, the consciousness of the meditator, the subject, appears to be dissolved in the object. The union of subject and object becomes samadhi.

The above eight steps of kriya yoga (Ashtanga yoga) are interwoven. By practising any and all of these limbs of yoga, one can experience different levels of consciousness and integration within themselves (Maheshwari, 2023; volume 1).

Levels of Existence

The Vedic model speaks of several inhering systems of existence, or koshas, that are nested like Russian dolls, each subtler than its predecessor. Kak (2023, volume 1) spoke of five levels: *annamaya* kosha (physical body), *pranamaya* kosha (life currents in the body), *manomaya* kosha (mind), *vijnanamaya* kosha (knowledge) and *anandamaya* kosha (happiness and wisdom). All of them are informed by consciousness that transcends the five.

Yama and niyama are said to purify the physical and physiological sheaths. Asana, pranayama and pratyahara work on the psychological and intellectual sheath. Dharana and dhyana clean the intellectual and joy sheaths. The practitioner of yoga unboundarises through all the yogic practices and integrates themselves at all levels and lives in harmony with the natural world. The leaders from this level of integration work for the welfare of the whole universe (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Koshas and Integration levels

Sheath	*Body sheaths (Kosha)*	*Stage of integration*
1	Physical body/Annamaya Kosa	Sarira sanyam/integration of body
2	Physiological body/Pranamaya Kosa	Indriya samyama/integration of senses
3	Psychological body/Manomaya Kosa	Prana Samyama/integration of energy
4	Intellectual body/Vijnanamaya kosa	Mano samyama/integration of mind
5	The body of joy/Anandamaya kosa	Buddhi Samyama/integration of intellect

Common Leadership Lessons from Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras

Both BG and YS discuss higher levels of consciousness and the path to achieve it. BG describes the paths of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana as a medium to raise to human consciousness. YS emphasises *Tapas, Swadhyaya and Isvara Pranidhana* as ways to raise human consciousness. When a person has clarity of understanding of their true nature, their beliefs change. As a result, one withdraws their senses and sees the world differently according to their dharma or moral duty. There are many common qualities of conscious individuals which various verses of both the scriptures mention:

1. **Compassion**

Without any hatred towards all beings, friendly and compassionate, without any sense of possessiveness, without any egoism, equal in pleasure and pain and forgiving. (BG, Ch-12, V-13)

Through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favourably disposed, serene and benevolent. (PY, Ch-1, V-33)

2. **Tolerance**

Heat and cold, pleasure and pain arise merely because of the contact of the senses with the sense objects. They are fleeting. Therefore, O Arjuna, try to tolerate them. (BG, Ch-2, V-14.)

When the sadhaka is firmly established in continence, knowledge, vigour, valour and energy flow to him. (Py, Ch-2, V-38).

3. **Fearlessness**

Said Lord Supreme, Fearlessness, excessive Sattva (purity), preoccupied with knowledge and yoga, charity, self-control, rituals and worship, study of scriptures, penance and simplicity. (BG, Ch-16, V-1)

Practice must be pursued with trust, confidence, vigour, keen memory and power of absorption to break this spiritual complacency. (PY, Ch-1, V-20)

4. **Equanimity of mind**

O chief among men, that person is eligible for immortality who is not troubled by the senses and who is equal in both happiness and sorrow. (BG, Ch-2, V-15)

From then on, the sadhaka is undisturbed by dualities. (PY, Ch-2, V-48)

5. **Control of senses**

The qualified karma yogi, who is pure in his heart and has conquered his mind and his senses, sees his self in all selves and remains free even though engaged in action. (BG, Ch-5, V-7)

Withdrawing the senses, mind and consciousness from contact with external objects, and then drawing them inwards towards the seer, is pratyahara. (PY, Ch-2, V-54)

6. **Meditation**

Through the practice of Yoga and meditation with the mind not moving in other directions, one can attain the Supreme Purusha, O Partha. (BG, Ch-8, V-8)

Meditation on God with the repetition of AUM removes obstacles to the mastery of the inner self. (PY, Ch-1, V-29)

7. **Contentment**

Non-cruelty, equanimity, contentment, austerity, donation, fame, disrepute, these feelings of all beings arise from Me only according to their nature. (BG, Ch-10, V-5)

From contentment and benevolence of consciousness comes supreme happiness. (PY, Ch-2, V-42)

8. **Love for almighty pure consciousness**

Those men who follow my doctrines regularly with utmost faith and without envy are liberated from the bondage of actions. (BG, Ch-3, V-31)

Burning zeal in practice, self-study and study of scriptures, and surrender to god are the acts of yoga. (PY, CH-2, V-1)

9. **Truthfulness**

Non-cruelty, truthfulness, without anger, self-sacrificing nature, peace of mind, being non-critical, compassionate to all beings, without greed, gentle, modest, firm-minded. (BG, Ch-16, V-2)

Non-violence, truth, abstention from stealing, continence, and absence of greed for possessions beyond one's need are the five pillars of Yama. (PY, Ch-2, V-30)

10. **Rational attitude**

All these men are definitely magnanimous souls. But the man of wisdom in my opinion is verily like Myself. He is certainly situated in Me and attains the highest end. (BG, Ch-7, V-18)

By dedicated practice of the various aspects of yoga impurities are destroyed: the crown of wisdom radiates in glory. (PY, Ch-2, V-28)

The above are some of the qualities of a person in higher consciousness as described in the BG and YS. Both scriptures emphasise the relation of presence of love-based qualities at the deeper levels of awareness. The

main focus of the leader is on the welfare of mankind rather than satisfying their self-greed. The individual's focus is to nourish the inner self of others and create an environment where the consciousness of the others can be raised. YS provides a pathway to raise the consciousness. As an individual gets established in their experience of higher states of consciousness, they develop an inner stability and realise their own unbounded nature and develop the ten qualities mentioned above.

Conclusion and Implications

Ancient wisdom traditions have much to offer to help create higher consciousness-based leadership to solve the grand challenges facing mankind. Bhagavad Gita approaches Consciousness as the overarching canopy underlying all action. Patanjali's system of kriya yoga is a complete package of tools and techniques for leaders to help achieve higher states of consciousness (Maheshwari, 2023). Einstein said, "Only those who attempt the absurd will achieve the impossible."

Management development programmes should include a systematic and regular study of Bhagavad Gita. Mahatma Gandhi was a global and effective leader who modelled his life and leadership on the basis of the BG and YS (Maheshwari, 2023). Gandhi's writings on the Bhagavad Gita are prolific. Several scholars (Bhawuk, 2011; Chatterjee, 2012; Dhiman, 2019; Kaipa & Radjou, 2013) have written commendable efforts to present and encapsulate the organisational leadership and managerial insights from BG. Several practitioners (Garg, 2004; Malhotra, 2010; Mishra, 2019; Piparaiya, 2004; Roka, 2008) have also selected and presented their practical and application-oriented interpretations of the BG in the context of their own experience of leadership and professional work. BG should be considered a resource for all leadership development and education courses. Without introspection and stabilisation in the inner self, the equanimity required for quick and critical decision-making and judgement of people and situations would be impaired. The Bhagavad Gita deserves to be the universal text of righteous living and effective leadership as a gem of condensation of universal truths and advice to leaders. It can inspire and accelerate consciousness-based leadership which will bring peace, prosperity and happiness to one and all.

References

Allen, S. J., & Martin, B. A. (2012). Developing leaders for a complex world. In J. A. Barbour (Ed.), *Leading in complex worlds* (pp. 79–102). Jossey-Bass.

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1997). Organisational learning: A theory of action perspective. *Reis, 77/78*, 345–348.

Arora, A., Elawar, M., & Cheng, S. (2019). Socially conscious leadership: An integrated model. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 13*(3), 38–43.

Barrett, R. (2006). *Building a values-driven organization*. Routledge.

Bass, B. M. (2008). *The Bass handbook of leadership*. Free Press.

Bhawuk, D. P. S. (2011). *Spirituality and Indian psychology-lessons from Bhagavad Gita*. Springer-Verlag.

Bozesan, M. (2009). *The making of a consciousness leader in business: An integral approach*. Institute of Transpersonal Psychology.

Burns, J. M. (2010). *Leadership*. HarperCollins.

Chakraborty, S. K. (1995). Ethics in management: Vedantic perspectives.

Chatterjee, D. (2012). *Timeless leadership*. Wiley-India.

Conger, J. (1992). *Learning to lead*. Jossey Bass.

Detsky, A. S., Baerlocher, M. O., & Wu, A. W. (2013, March 19). Admitting mistakes: Ethics says yes instinct says no. *CMAJ: Canadian Medical Association Journal, 185*(5), 448, 1 p.

Dhiman, S. (2019). *The Bhagavad Gita and leadership*. Palgrave-Macmillan.

Harari, Y. N. (2018). *21 lessons for the 21st century*. Jonathan Cape.

Harung, H. S., Heaton, D. P., & Alexander, C. N. (1995). A unified theory of leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 16*, 7.

Harung, H. S., Heaton, D. P., Graff, W. W., & Alexander, C. N. (1996). Peak performance and higher states of consciousness: A study of world-class performers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.

Iyengar, B. K. S. (1965). Light on yoga: The definitive guide to yoga practice.

Iyengar, B. K. S. (2012). *Core of the yoga sutras*. HarperThorsons.

Kaipa, P., & Radjou, N. (2013). *From smart to wise-acting and leading with wisdom*. Random House Publishers

Kak, S. C. (2023, in press). Foreword. In A. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Garg, R. S. (2004). *Gita for success in modern life*. New Age Books.

Glover, J., Friedman, H., & Jones, J. (2002, Summer). Adaptive leadership. *Organization Development Journal, 20*, 2.

Gunaratne, B. (2011). *Mindfulness in plain English*. Wisdom Publications.

Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. FT press.

Lamontagne, J. (2006). Admitting mistakes: Rehabilitating a damaged reputation. *Public Relations Tactics, 13*(2), 13.

Laszlo, C., Waddock, S., Maheshwari, A., Nigri, G., & Storberg-Walker, J. (2021). Quantum worldviews: How science and spirituality are converging to transform consciousness for meaningful solutions to wicked problems. *Humanistic Management Journal, 6*(3), 293–311.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Quantum leadership from Yoga Sutras. In A. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Malhotra, V. (2010). *The Bhagavad Gita and management*. Third Eye.

McKenna, P. J., & Reeser, E. B. (2015). Recovering from a leadership misstep. *Of Counsel, 34*(7).

Mishra, J. S. (2019). *The art of success-21 mantras from Bhagavad Gita*. Bloomsbury.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness: Simple answers to the big questions in life*. Aguilar.

Nader, T., & Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Consciousness as the source of purposeful leadership. In A. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Pappas, G. (2010). *The integral leadership of Dr. Jane Goodall: An interpretive biographical case study of her life*. Fielding Graduate University.

Piparaiya, R. K. (2004). *Yoga of work*. InduVista.

Ranganathananda, S. (2000). *Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs*. Advaita Ashrama (A Publication House of Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math).

Rao, K. R., & Paranjape, A. C. (2016). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. DK Print world.

Roka, P. (2008). *Bhagavad Gita on effective leadership*. Jaico Publishing.

Ross, S. (2013). A conceptual model for understanding the process of self-leadership development and action steps to promote personal leadership development. *Journal of Management Development, 33*(4), 2014.

Sengupta, S. S. (2021). Level-5 integral leadership styles: Transcendence of mind. *IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *20*(2).

Sisodia, R. S. (2009). Doing business in the age of conscious capitalism. *Journal of Indian Business Research*.

Snook, S., Nohria, N., & Khurana, R. (2012). *The handbook for teaching leadership*. Sage Publications.

Van Wart, M. (2008). *Leadership in public organisations*. Prentice-Hall of India.

Wilber, K. (1993). *The spectrum of consciousness*. Quest Books.

Yogi, M. M. (1963). *Science of being and art of living*. New American Library.

CHAPTER 6

Fluid Intelligence for Higher Order Thinking: Balancing the Subjective and Objective for Sustaining Impactful Wisdom in This Era of Disruption

Mohan Raj Gurubatham

Accelerating Change Drivers

Global business is bombarded by change drivers which have been experienced as accelerating (Friedman, 2017). Weick and Quinn (1999) by acute foresight suggested that we are witnessing disruption and discontinuity that impact organizations and their leadership styles. Discontinuous change may be contrasted with continuous change (or *Kaizen* in terms of the Japanese ethos). Discontinuous change triggers urgency-mode transactional responses in managing resources. Continuous change, on the other hand, is oriented toward a harmonious clarification of values through incremental change in a steady-state environment. The type

M. R. Gurubatham (✉)
HELP University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
e-mail: mohanrwg@help.edu.my

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_6

of leadership in an era of discontinuous change will need to balance both task orientation and people orientation. It will value humanistic approaches to building consensus, problem-solving, motivation, and building engagement, and also be able to exploit opportunities represented by discontinuous change drivers by rapidly deciding to deploy resources. Management graduates therefore need to go beyond mere comprehension, transcend the boundaries of their current competencies, and learn to glean insights by connecting the dots from one context to another. They need self-awareness, motivation, ambition, curiosity, balanced personality characteristics, deeper cognition, the ability to learn and solve problems, and good communication skills (Church, et al., 2015).

Interestingly in talent management today leadership development is showing up that problem-solving, creativity, coaching, and team management are often more important than functional knowledge and skills (Church & Silzer, 2014). The research in Google's Project Oxygen (Garvin et al., 2013) and by the Oxford and Martin School's research on Future Skills in 2030 (Danuser & Kendzia, 2019; Frey & Osborne, 2017) also found that team management, emotional intelligence, communication, and problem-solving skills were ranked higher than the STEM skills in their recruitment activities. The top characteristics of success at Google were all "soft" skills:

1. Is a good coach.
2. Empowers team and does not micromanage.
3. Creates an inclusive team environment, showing concern for success and well-being.
4. Is productive and results-oriented.
5. Is a good communicator—listens and shares information.
6. Supports career development and discusses performance.
7. Has a clear vision/strategy for the team.
8. Has key technical skills to help advise the team.
9. Collaborates across Google business units.
10. Is a strong decision-maker.

This suggests that narrow occupation-specific skills need to be supplemented with broader skills related to the ability to work with others, think critically, and learn constantly. There is a growing need to *learn how to learn* given the rapid obsolescence of knowledge and discontinuous change in contexts. Therefore, management education needs

to develop this fluid ability to connect the dots, to unfreeze from the conventional narrative, and to withstand the stresses of the shocks of disruptive change. This includes the ability to connect pertinent business and industry themes *inductively* to effectively respond to dynamic global and industry drivers. Learning how to learn and process unfamiliar content is the way forward.

Types of Pertinent Intelligence

Raymond Cattell (1963) articulated two types of intelligence: Fluid Intelligence and Crystallized Intelligence. Fluid intelligence has been identified as the vital ability to learn new content and apply it to novel conditions. It *involves* the context-free processing power of intelligence. Crystallized intelligence is based on the knowledge of prior acquired content (Cattell, 1963). Processing context-free data into information and then into higher order cognitive activity results in both knowledge and wisdom (Gurubatham, 2005) . Crystallized intelligence, on the other hand, is about the content of knowledge, such as facts, figures, and names all stored in repositories. Certifications in education may involve this aspect of knowledge, as they are based on what one can remember and recall. This knowledge lends itself to repositories in computer memory. In the context of the increasing power of Artificial Intelligence systems, it appears that fluid intelligence is much more desirable with its intrinsic processing power for new knowledge generation that counterbalances the rapid obsolescence of knowledge.

Inductive Thinking

Discontinuous change patterns may not fit the learned theories concepts and models. One needs to be open-minded and willing to acknowledge that one may not have seen these new phenomena before. The ability to accept the situation as is is based upon being honest enough to perceive a phenomenon for what it really is and not superimpose the phenomenon with preconceived frames or models from the past. Inductive thinking in this manner requires fresh thinking from fresh perspectives and the ability to be open and ingenuously start from scratch. This is a big paradigm shift and even a paradigm transcendence. The stereotyped application of past learning is called negative transfer by Royer (1979), which means that past learning is inappropriately transferred to a new context and it may be

irrelevant. Novel situations may not necessarily present themselves with peripheral cues and in such a context one may be tempted to overlay the peripheral framing from old knowledge. Such framing may trigger inappropriate stereotyped responses. Higher order thinking may often involve thinking without transposing old frames into new situations.

Developing Wisdom

Fluid intelligence is a form of higher order thinking and helps generate wisdom. Sternberg's balance theory of wisdom (Sternberg, 1998, 2009), defines wisdom as the application of intelligence, creativity, and knowledge as mediated by positive ethical values toward the achievement of a common good. This theory is a major step toward flourishing humanity.

The notion of fluid intelligence in the service of wisdom is not really that new. Consider this poem from the Persian sage poet Rumi from the thirteenth Century, who glimpsed and commented about this special intelligence ("Two Kinds of Intelligence" by Rumi).

Two Kinds of Intelligence
There are two kinds of intelligence: one acquired,
as a child in school memorizes facts and concepts
from books and from what the teacher says,
collecting information from the traditional sciences
as well as from the new sciences.
With such intelligence you rise in the world.
You get ranked ahead or behind others
in regard to your competence in retaining
information. You stroll with this intelligence
in and out of fields of knowledge, getting always more
marks on your preserving tablets.
There is another kind of tablet, one
already completed and preserved inside you.
A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness
in the center of the chest. This other intelligence
does not turn yellow or stagnate. It's fluid,
and it doesn't move from outside to inside
through conduits of plumbing-learning.
This second knowing is a fountainhead
from within you, moving out

—Rumi (1207–1273).

Cognitive development for deeper and wiser thinking often involves fluid intelligence. Developing wisdom can be complicated. In higher order thinking also negative transfer can occur. When one inadvertently applies stereotype assumptions about gender, economics, culture, politics, and ethnicity, cognitive biases and distortions can be both obvious and subtle. There is a need to transcend the "perception box" thus accrued. Cognitive biases lead to erroneous assumptions (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973, 1974, 1983). Cognitive biases can work against generational shifts in values and may mask the need for continual corporate re-branding. Backhaus et al. (2002) and Backhaus (2016), found that corporate reputation involving sustainability, diversity, and corporate reputation are more important factors for job seekers entering the job market from college. Social media further augments this attitude among younger people (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Cultural values resist re-framing, and the application of standard economic developmental logic can create serious friction between the beneficiaries and the benefactors. The dynamic Asian countries tend to take a collectivist view as opposed to individualistic free-market views (Hofstede et al., 2010). Thus, decision-making in such contexts may require a different process of consensus-building, through the intervention of wise elders.

Cognitive Literacy Value Chain

The nature, process, and impacts of fluid thinking, learning, and application are framed in the Cognitive Literacy Value Chain (Gurubatham, 2005). Figure 6.1 can help fluid thinking and its impacts in terms of the transfer of learning and competencies whether they are localized, systemic, or far-reaching. The model shows two separate mechanisms for the transfer of learning. The first is *procedural working memory* which operates on short-term memory and is applied to routine skills. The second, *higher order thinking involves metacognition* and is a reflective higher order thinking which provides the ability to step back and evaluate and synthesize. Fluid intelligence predominates in working memory (Cowan, 2014). Working memory is like a narrow band with a limited capacity of short-term memory (Cowan, 2010). It is said to be a bandwidth of 7 plus and minus 2 absolute bits of information (Miller, 1956), involving serial processing (Garavan, 2004). Long-term memory involves parallel processing and appears to be unbounded. Long-term memory involves synthesizing abstracted knowledge with experience. So fluid intelligence

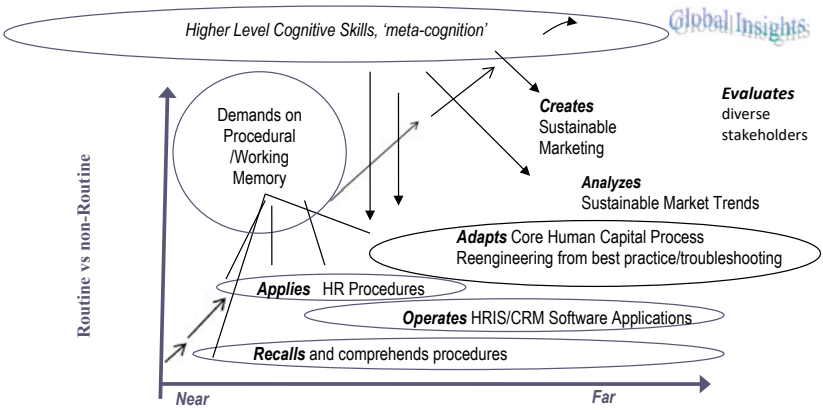


Fig. 6.1 The cognitive literacy value chain

also operates upon long-term memory that is available from the crystallized intelligence. Higher order thinking skills at the higher end of the cognitive literacy value chain (Gurubatham, 2005, 2014a, 2014b, 2018) culminates in wisdom with far-reaching impacts.

The *cognitive literacy value chain* (CLVC) thus is a model of how data and knowledge can be transformed into wisdom. Much of modern knowledge work (Drucker, 1969, 1999) involves processing data into information into knowledge through wisdom and virtue (Turriago-Hoyos et al., 2016). Data analysts (Maheshwari, 2021) add value by interpreting the meaning of data and insights and convert them into knowledge that must be communicated to business executives. Such cognitive processing is a premium value-addition activity in the knowledge economy (Gurubatham, 2005).

Two Dimensions of CVLV

The CLCV has two dimensions. The first dimension, the vertical dimension is about *non-routine* versus *routine thinking*. Routine thinking is often automated (Bargh & Williams, 2006). Innovation is a more non-routine process-based application, whereas creativity involves breaking boundaries in ideas at a deeper and wider level (Anderson et al., 2014). The second dimension involves the *range of transfer* as discussed before, of the learning and the range of application of the learning impacts

from competencies. The range of transfer can be *near transfer* or *far transfer* (Royer, 1979). Near transfer learning is limited to original learning contexts and is narrow in its application. It is like a cookie-cutter type learning phenomenon. Near transfer involves learning without much reflection and impacts only adjacent contexts or those with a limited degree of variability from the original learning context. Behavioral learning is much like this.

Far transfer, on the other hand, has a wider range of applicability where the application is less bound to the original learning context. It is unbounded thinking that is unfrozen from the original contexts and narrative. Such thinking seems to transcend the domains of functions both in subject matter as well as functional structures in organizations. Such far transfer learning oftentimes is experienced as abstract and purer in terms of deeper principles being cognized and processed. Far transfer may often involve *high-road* thinking strategies (Salomon & Perkins, 1989) which involve conscious experience reflection. When the thought *process* becomes *transparent*, it can be reflected upon and applied in a varying range of contexts. Fluidity appears to be a characteristic of nature and the process of subtler levels of thinking.

The diagonal line from the bottom left to the top right in Fig. 6.1 has several competencies that reflect localized, non-routine impacts. It is basically a representation of the tendency as one ascends the Cognitive Literacy Value Chain. This creates capabilities that impact not just systemically across the organization, but outside the organization within the industry and beyond industries. Many other outcomes or competencies can be mapped around the diagonal, over and above the examples shown in the figure.

The lower half of Fig. 6.1 shows the more localized impact of routine thinking. At this level, crystallized intelligence predominates. Learning at this lower level does not have to invoke critical thinking, nor does it have to unfreeze from unconscious assumptions or biases. Its horizontal impact is not very wide. Troubleshooting is such an example. Troubleshooting emphasizes procedural accuracy or template-matching from pattern recognition paradigms. However, it requires some operational flexibility or transfers thinking.

Far transfer involves metacognitions or "high-road" reflective thinking at the higher end of the CLVC. Fluid intelligence is more directly involved in far transfer. Far transfer is further effective in mitigating rapid obsolescence in knowledge and skills. In Fig. 6.1, the higher

order thinking skills at the *top right* of the CLVC essentially represent *Wisdom*. Wisdom is deeper and wider thinking often involving global insights. Insights simply mean cognizance of what is not obvious, hidden, concealed, and revealed. Wisdom tends to look further in time historically and into the future (Sternberg, 2009). Wisdom evaluates, empathizes, analyses as well as integrates, and subsumes the lower cognitive levels of thinking. Moreover, wisdom carries a highly empathetic component as well as experience. More critically, wisdom's effectiveness rests on the ability to yield synergistic insights. Wisdom can guide toward a flourishing humanity.

Traditional MBA programs and textbooks focus largely on narrow stereotyped *single loop learning* (Argyris, 1976, 2005). They do not adequately address far transfer. Higher order thinking that can identify latent themes is often ignored as subtle, hidden situational variables. For example, a teaching and learning strategy to nudge far transfer into a variety of contexts, invoking empathy, entertaining, and accommodating to multiple perspectives may involve the following strategy.

Nudging the Process of the Transfer of Learning to Wider Global and Modern Contexts

Far transfer thinking can be nudged and conventional narratives as declarative knowledge can be deconstructed, and actively discussed by students. Working in international contexts concerning the environment and involving different groups of people such as business, communities, and activists, requires wider and wiser thinking. For example, a sustainability teaching case can involve wisdom with the components of empathy and multiple perspectives. One can examine the many layers of stakeholder analysis and determine that the lifestyles of traditional peoples are unfavorably impacted by commercial timber logging in the forests of an Asian country. Socratic prompts in teaching can provoke "Who are the protagonists?" and "What are the drivers impacting an organization, a country, a region, and a culture". "How are they similar or different?" Appropriate stakeholder management tools and impact assessment can be applied with discussion and then prioritized and quantified.

Human Creativity and Critical Thinking in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

There has been much discussion of artificial intelligence or AI replacing human skills in the third decade of the twenty-first century (Shneider & Bakhsi, 2017). Shneiderman (2022) suggests that rather than engaging in rational empiricism that AI researchers tend to favor, one should work toward designing AI with humans at the center, by speaking with humans as users and empathizing with them. This is often the paradigm that is used in design thinking as well as UX design. Human creativity, wisdom, ethics, and critical thinking become complementary imperatives to address potential abuses of AI and big data-based surveillance using social media and the metaverse. While some have commented on the promise of using AI and human intelligence augmentation for higher order thinking (Kolbjørnsrud et al., 2017), others have maintained that *replacement of human operators* can indeed *occur* (Huang & Rust, 2018) threatening human knowledge work entirely.

Fluid and Crystallized Intelligence in Older Age

Fluid intelligence and crystallized intelligence have been linked to stages in the human lifespan development. It has been empirically argued that fluid intelligence may be more critical in the early and mid-career stages of life whereas crystallized intelligence supporting wisdom with an experience base much like aged wine, is more fitting to come to terms with at the later stages of life with cognitive decline as we age (Brooks, 2022).

Perhaps another angle on fluid and crystalized intelligence from the classic perspective of Cattell (1963) and mainstream psychology is that it can be integrated with life span development by suggesting that the ability to retrieve content is not so critical in the knowledge economy where there is rapid obsolescence of data as AI can do this. Oftentimes in shifting scenarios with relentless change drivers impacting in parallel, we need to be *inductive* even if we are older. Whether cognitive decline is a frozen parameter or not is interesting with the recent and promising discovery of neuroplasticity.

With meditation and mindfulness, fluid intelligence has been found to increase in the middle-aged residents in nursing homes (Alexander et al., 1989). In this study, 73 residents of 8 nursing homes for the elderly with a mean age of 81 years were randomly assigned among

no treatment, and 3 treatments were highly similar in external structure and expected outcomes. These were Transcendental Meditation (TM) program, mindfulness training (MF) in active distinction making, or a relaxation (low mindfulness) program. Planned comparison Results indicated that the "restful alert" TM group showed most improvement, followed by MF, contrasting with relaxation and no-treatment groups. Tests such as dementia screening tests, associate learning subtests, word fluency subtests, overlearned verbal task tests, and the Stroop color-word interference tests, that are all associated with declining cognitive performance with aging, showed a remarkable improvement with Transcendental Meditation and mindfulness. Longitudinal testing after 3 years revealed a 100% maintained effect in persons using Transcendental Meditation and 87.5% in those within the mindfulness program. Whereas the other control groups indicated lower scores (65 and 75%). Surprisingly this study did not stimulate more research on the positive impact of meditation on cognitive decline in the elderly (Marciniak et al., 2014). Admittedly more research is valuable with better controls and larger samples. Nonetheless, the results in this seminal study by Alexander et al. (1989) are intriguing and groundbreaking. Subsequent reviews with metanalysis such as by Gard et al. (2014) showed that there was an improvement in mindfulness and meditation studies. Although the sample size 73 in the TM studies was quite small and need to be replicated.

Unfreezing Fluidly from the Conventional Narrative by Transcending

In the related chapter in volume 1, Gurubatham (2023) examined how transcending toward higher states of consciousness leading to a state of Unity consciousness goes beyond all paradigms to provide a "pure" perspective or a genuinely value-free perspective. This requires regularly disconnecting from conventional narratives and wisdom. Transcending helps unfreeze to the depths of mind, fluidly expanding the scope for contextual flexibility in ethics. It can help with moving to the higher levels of the CLVC relating to far transfer and development of wisdom.

Transcending has outcomes that develop fluid intelligence to facilitate far transfer toward infinite correlation meaning wider positive improvements in cognition, behavior, and relationships even including far-reaching conflict resolution (Orme-Johnson et al., 1988) proposed as "superfluid" in nature. Transcendental meditation (TM) taps the

experience of transcendental consciousness that promotes fluid intelligence effortlessly which may facilitate far transfer even infinitely so that managers may zoom in and out of contexts with insights to make appropriate ethical judgments. Transcending is a process of unfreezing boundaries of thought for an infinite range of transfers in terms of impacts. Being balanced and practical, and having both task orientation and people orientation, is rare in leadership. Empirical and peer-reviewed research on TM have shown increased field independence, which is indicative of perception that is not rigidly bound to the environment by increasing the flexibility of perception and improving verbal problem-solving (Dillbeck, 1982). It has also demonstrated increased creativity along with increased fluid and culture-fair intelligence (Dillbeck et al., 1986; Tim & Orme-Johnson, 2001). It also has shown increased brain wave coherence, which is indicative of orderliness of brain and cognition during the practice of TM and has also been found to induce higher levels of moral reasoning (Alexander et al, 1990), as shown in longitudinal studies with adult inmates in maximum security incarceration in California, according to Kohlberg's stage development modes (Nidich et al., 2000). TM has also helped to enculture wisdom as shown in a 10-year longitudinal study (Chandler, 1990). TM has also been found to mitigate occupational stress among employees (Elder et al., 2014).

Conclusion and Implications

The ability to appraise discontinuous change, disruption, and completely novel phenomena requires both a fresh vision and perspective often drawing upon our wisdom from the past. One needs to learn how to unlearn. Such a process is effectively enabled by the ability to transcend from the conventional narratives into the source of our innermost Being through techniques of meditation and in this case, Transcendental Meditation, or TM, which has a large body of empirical evidence as well as testimonies of effortlessness in learning and practice. TM develops fluid intelligence as we have discussed which is the ability to learn new phenomenon and apply both learned and new solutions as opposed to crystallized intelligence which is merely the ability to recollect or recall declarative information from memory.

As the *4th industrial revolution* (Philbeck et al., 2018) and digitalization advance, it appears that this ability is much more salient to not just mitigate obsolescence in data and content but the need to have processing

power inherent in the development of fluid intelligence (Cranson et al., 1991), as well as the ability to be able to unfreeze or unlearn. One cannot be stuck at the level of obsolete data or content. There is a need to refresh the mind as the container of knowledge. The need to process data into information, into knowledge culminating in wisdom is the cognitive literacy value chain (CLVC). This is key to the *knowledge-based* economy. Higher value-added thinking is the basis of higher value addition in creative products, branding as perceptual assets, and the valuation of knowledge-based "mental" products in the knowledge economy (Gurubatham, 2005). Software companies and data-driven manufacturing organizations are examples of companies trading at much higher levels of market capitalization than companies which are largely based upon physical assets and the physical production of goods and services.

In the earlier industrial revolutions and globalization, raw materials were physically extracted and processed such as oil and minerals or timber then exported around the world in heavy cargo moving slowly across the oceans. In the modern knowledge economy, digitalization can process value in seconds to collapse time and space across a borderless world through electronic commerce as well as outsourcing of business processes, medical analysis, financial analysis, and much more. Fluid intelligence and the ability to zoom in and out of context is vital. Yet its compelling advantages must be balanced with the dangers of undermining cultural integrity and the precious traditional values of many societies. The dislocation of workers from families, erosion of cultural values, and work–life balance are a few examples. Wisdom is needed. TM can deepen and widen the mind with fresh thinking. It can enable specificity in focus while being universal in scope. The ability to transcend is key to being adaptive and progressive while being psychologically and culturally integrated.

Fluid intelligence is cognate with contextual intelligence as well as cultural intelligence. The exact areas of overlap and differences are still unclear as research continues to unfold, yet one can appreciate that one size does not fit all; the ability to evaluate in situation-specific contexts for ethics, problem-solving, creative wisdom in policy-making, developing insights to fulfill or resolve conflicts, to synthesize many different perspectives into a unified wholeness are becoming increasingly vital for the very survival of humanity. To go beyond survival and to flourish is to enjoy our diversity of humanity and ecology as a unified wholeness. To know oneself is a key part of self-exploration as a vital part of human intelligence (Shearer, 2018). The ability to appraise a turbulent world with

extended periods of discontinuous change often punctuated by disruption and brief periods of tranquility as we are experiencing today, demands the ability to be at peace with oneself and yet be dynamic enough to adapt and respond to any contingency. Paradoxically, the ability to withdraw from infinite differentiation in an ever-increasing pace of life into oneself through meditation and then to come back into a waking state of transcendental consciousness with dynamism, ready to deal with any challenge is the way forward as well as appearing to be the new normal in modern life.

References

Alexander, C. N., Langer, E. J., Newman, R. I., Chandler, H. M., & Davies, J. L. (1989). Transcendental meditation, mindfulness, and longevity: An experimental study with the elderly. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*(6), 950–964. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.57.6.950

Alexander, C. N, Davies, J. L., Dixon, C. A., Dillbeck, M. C., Druker, S. M., Oetzel, R. M., Muehlman, J. M., & Orme-Johnson, D. (1990). Growth of higher stages of consciousness: Maharishi's Vedic Psychology of human development. In C. N. Alexander & E. Langer (Eds.), *Higher stages of human development*. Oxford University Press.

Anderson, N., Potočnik, K., & Zhou, J. (2014). Innovation and creativity in organizations: A state-of-the-science review, prospective commentary, and guiding framework. *Journal of Management, 40*(5), 1297–1333. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314527128

Argyris, C. (1976). Single-loop and double-loop models in research on decision making. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 21*(3), 363–375. https://doi.org/10.2307/2391848

Argyris, C. (2005). Double-loop learning in organizations: A theory of action perspective. In K. G. Smith & M. A. Hitt (Eds.), *Great minds in management: The process of theory development* (pp. 261–279). Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0199276813. OCLC 60418039.

Backhaus, K. (2016). Employer branding revisited. *Organization Management Journal, 13*(4), 193–201. https://doi.org/10.1080/15416518.2016.124512.

Backhaus, K. B., Stone, B. A., & Heiner, K. (2002). Exploring the relationship between corporate social performance and employer attractiveness. *Business & Society, 41*(3), 292–318. https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650302041003003

Bargh, J. A., & Williams, E. L. (2006). The Automaticity of social life. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 15*(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0963-7214.2006.00395.x

Brooks, A. C. (2022). *From strength to strength: Finding success, happiness and deep purpose in the second half of life*. Green Tree.

Cattell, R. B. (1963). Theory of fluid and crystallized intelligence: A critical experiment. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 54*, 1–22.

Chandler, H. M. (1990). Transcendental meditation and awakening wisdom: A 10-year longitudinal study of self-development (meditation). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 51*(10), 504.

Church, A. H., & Silzer, R. F. (2014). Going behind the corporate curtain with a blue print for leadership potential: An integrated framework for identifying high-potential talent. People and Strategy, 36(4), 51+. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A360357803/AONE?u=anon~b681039csid=bookmark-AONExid=c9216632

Church, A. H., Rotolo, C. T., Ginther, N. M., & Levine, R. (2015). How are top companies designing and managing their high-potential programs? A follow-up talent management benchmark study. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 67*(1), 17–47. https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000030

Cowan, N. (2010). The magical mystery four: How is working memory capacity limited, and why? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 19*(1), 51–57. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721409359277

Cowan, N. (2014). Working memory underpins cognitive development, learning, and education. *Educational Psychology Review, 26*(2), 197–223. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-013-9246-y

Cranson, R. W., Orme-Johnson, D. W., Gackenbach, J., Dillbeck, M. C., Jones, C. H., & Alexander, C. N. (1991). Transcendental meditation and improved performance on intelligence-related measures: A longitudinal study. *Personality and Individual Differences, 12*(10), 1105–1116. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(91)90040-i

Danuser, Y., & Kendzia, M. J. (2019). Technological advances and the changing nature of work: Deriving future skills set. *Advances in Applied Sociology, 9*(10), 463–477. https://doi.org/10.4236/aasoci.2019.910034

Dillbeck, M. C. (1982). Meditation and flexibility of visual perception and verbal problem solving. *Memory and Cognition, 10*(3), 207–215.

Dillbeck, M. C., Assimakis, P. D., Raimondi, D., Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Rowe, R. (1986). Longitudinal effects of the transcendental meditation and TM-Sidhi program on cognitive ability and cognitive style. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 62*, 731–738.

Drucker, P. F. (1969). Work and worker in the knowledge society. *The Age of Discontinuity*, 269–290. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-434-90395-5.50017-1

Drucker, P. F. (1999). Knowledge-worker productivity: The biggest challenge. *California Management Review, 41*(2), 79–94. https://doi.org/10.2307/41165987

Elder, C., Nidich, S., Moriarty, F., & Nidich, R. (2014). Effect of transcendental meditation on employee stress, depression, and burnout: A randomized controlled study. *The Permanente Journal, 18*(1), 19–23. https://doi.org/10.7812/TPP/13-1022172

Frey, C. B., & Osborne, M. A. (2017). The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation? *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 114*, 254–280. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2016.08.019

Friedman, T. L. (2017). *Thank you for being late: An optimist's guide to thriving in the age of accelerations*. Picador/Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Gard, T., Hölzel, B. K., & Lazar, S. W. (2014). The potential effects of meditation on age-related cognitive decline: A systematic review. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1307*, 89–103. https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.12348

Garvin, D. A., Wagonfeld, A. B., & Kind, L. (2021, April). Google's project oxygen: Do managers matter? In *Harvard business school case* (pp. 313–110). Revised October 2013.

Gurubatham, M. R. (2005). Understanding and interpreting the drivers of the knowledge economy. In *IFIP international federation for information processing* (pp. 189–202). https://doi.org/10.1007/0-387-23120-x_17

Gurubatham, M. R. (2014a). Enlivening fluid intelligence in blended active learning within the cognitive literacy value chain framework. In Elsevier Procedia Social & Behavioral Sciences in Science Direct, Volume 123 (20 March 2014), of Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences on ScienceDirect (www.sciencedirect.com).

Gurubatham, M. R. (2014b). Successful cases in technology-enabled active teaching and metacognitive learning strategies in blended learning for globalization. In V. Zuzevičiūtė (Ed.), *E-learning as a socio-cultural system: A multidimensional*. IGI Global.

Gurubatham, M. R. (2018, February). Facilitating the far transfer of knowledge by metacognition in ICT enabled globalized learning. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences, 9*(2).

Gurubatham, M. R. (2023). Wisdom towards unity: Developing managerial talent through development of consciousness. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management, volume 1: Palgrave studies in workplace spirituality and fulfillment*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-06234-6_10

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind: Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. McGraw-Hill.

Huang, M.-H., & Rust, R. T. (2018). Artificial intelligence in service. *Journal of Service Research, 21*(2), 155–172. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670517752459

Kolbjørnsrud, V., Amico, R., & Thomas, R. J. (2017). Partnering with AI: How organizations can win over skeptical managers. *Strategy & Leadership, 45*(1), 37–43. https://doi.org/10.1108/sl-12-2016-0085

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Teaching data analytics using natural law as integrative framework. In M. R. Gurubatham & G. A. Williams (Eds.), *Advancing innovation and sustainable outcomes in international graduate education*. IGI Global.

Marciniak, R., Sheardova, K., Čermáková, P., Hudeček, D., Šumec, R., & Hort, J. (2014, January 27). Effect of meditation on cognitive functions in context of aging and neurodegenerative diseases. *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience, 8*, 17, Sec. Pathological Conditions https://doi.org/10.3389/fnbeh.2014.00017

Miller, G. A. (1956). The magical number seven, plus or minus two: Some limits on our capacity for processing information. *Psychological Review., 63*, 81–97.

Nidich, S. I., Nidich, R. J., & Alexander, C. N. (2000). *Journal of Adult Development*, *7*(4), 217–225. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1009559327351

Orme-Johnson, D. W., Alexander, C. N., Davies, J. L., Chandler, H. M., & Larimore, W. E. (1988). International peace project in the Middle East: The effects of the Maharishi Technology of the Unified Field. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 32*(4), 776–812. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002788032004009

Philbeck, T., & Davis, N. (2018). The fourth industrial revolution: Shaping a new era. *Journal of International Affairs, 72*(1), 17–22. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26588339

Royer, J. (1979). Theories of transfer of learning. *Educational Psychologist, 14*, 53–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461527909529207

Salomon, G., & Perkins, D. N. (1989). Rocky roads to transfer: Rethinking mechanism of a neglected phenomenon. *Educational Psychologist, 24*(2), 113–142. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep2402_1

Schneider, P., & Bakhshi, H. (2017, September). *The future of skills: Employment in 2030*. Nesta. https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/the-future-of-skills-employment-in-2030/

Shneiderman, B. (2022). *Human-centered AI*. Oxford University Press.

Shearer, B. (2018). Multiple intelligences in teaching and education: Lessons learned from neuroscience. *Journal of Intelligence, 6*(3), 38. https://doi.org/10.3390/jintelligence6030038

Sivertzen, A.-M., Nilsen, E. R., & Olafsen, A. H. (2013). Employer branding: Employer attractiveness and the use of social media. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 22*(7), 473–483. https://doi.org/10.1108/jpbm-09-2013-0393

Sternberg, R. J. (1998). A balance theory of wisdom. *Review of General Psychology, 2*, 347–365. In School and later in life, A paper commissioned

for the conference on Liberal Education and Effective Practice, Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise, March 12–13, 2009 4th Annual Conference, Clarke University.

Sternberg, R. J. (2009) Academic intelligence is not enough WICS: An expanded model for effective practice.

Tim, S. K., & Orme-Johnson, D. W. (2001). Three randomized experiments on the longitudinal effects of the transcendental meditation technique on cognition. *Intelligence, 29*(5), 419–440.

Turriago-Hoyos, A., Thoene, U., & Arjoon, S. (2016). Knowledge workers and virtues in Peter Drucker's management theory. *SAGE Open, 6*(1), 215824401663963. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016639631

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability: A heuristic for judging frequency and probability. *Cognitive Psychology, 5*(2), 207–232.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science, 185*(4157), 1124–1131.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1983). Extensional versus intuitive reasoning: The conjunction fallacy in probability judgment. *Psychological Review, 90*(4), 293.

Weick, K. E., & Quinn, R. E. (1999). Organizational change and development. *Annual Review of Psychology, 50*(1), 361–386. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.50.1.361

CHAPTER 7

A Consciousness-Based Approach to Sustaining Work–Life Balance and Subjective Well-Being

Indu K. Pereis and Rohana Ulluwishewa

Introduction

Work–Life Balance (WLB) has received increasing attention from management and employee representatives, governments, and the popular media due to rapid changes in technology, the post-pandemic employment landscape, and the impact of work on mental and social well-being (Hamilton Skurak et al., 2021; Pendleton et al., 2021). Today, our jobs have become less secure as lifelong careers and more reliant on technology, where knowledge is shared in real-time, irrespective of location or time. The boundary between professional and personal life is becoming blurred

I. K. Pereis (✉)
New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, Wellington, New Zealand
e-mail: Indu.peiris@openpolytechnic.ac.nz

R. Ulluwishewa
Sri Jayawardanepura University, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka
e-mail: ulluwishewa@sjp.ac.lk

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_7

due to social media's impact on building and managing one's persona, identity and reputation in online contexts (Ryan et al., 2020). Although employees now have more flexibility over how they work, they must constantly manage the challenges of balancing key areas related to their well-being; their family members' well-being; and work performance (Campo et al., 2021).

WLB, from an employee perspective, is the maintenance of a balance between work and home responsibilities (De Cieri et al., 2005). However, maintaining a balance between work and home is perceived as challenging. Some people need to work long hours to earn enough money, while others may have to put in long hours as they have an enormous workload. Some may love their work and work long hours, while others feel they need to work long hours to demonstrate their commitment to their work (Chandra, 2012). When one fails to balance responsibilities at work and home, it can create a spillover effect. The Spill Over theory suggests that a person's experiences that develop in one domain can carry over into another (Zedeck, 1992). When work demands hamper personal well-being, work interferes with family life and vice versa (Crouter, 1984; Du et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important to understand the underlying relationships that affect an individual's ability to balance such situations.

The existing literature related to WLB focuses on objective measures such as time (long working hours), organizational aspects (job demand, structure, management style, and type of jobs), technology, and job position (Iacovoiu, 2020). Researchers have also used psychological measures such as emotional intelligence and self-efficacy to understand how they affect one's ability to balance work–life conflicts. For example, emotional intelligence has been identified as a factor negatively associated with work-related stress and positively related with the quality of life (Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012; Min, 2014). Chan et al. (2016) found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and work-to-family enrichment and work–life balance.

The primary focus of the existing WLB literature is to show what happens to WLB when subjective and objective variables are at play. This chapter intends to discover how individuals could behave in a way that they could effectively manage WLB along with work–family demands and achieve sustained happiness. We assert that by using the Western theorization of Construal Level Theory (CLT), hedonic adaptation theory, and the ancient Eastern philosophical views of consciousness, it is possible to

get a deeper understanding of the construction of temporal, emotional and behavioural demands.

We posit that the answer to managing WLB lies in knowing two key things: situational awareness and baseline happiness (transcendence from sensory experience). However, the surveyed literature has not yet explored this link between WLB, perceived situational awareness and subjective well-being. This chapter intends to bridge this gap by offering a conceptual framework to explore this link.

The chapter is structured as follows: first, to gain a better appreciation of the context of this paper, key theoretical constructs are introduced using the existing literature. Second, we present a conceptual model to illustrate the integrative nature of the constructs and their respective roles. Finally, we discuss future research directions.

Literature Review

Subjective Well-Being

Well-being is generally viewed as a macro-level indicator equated with the material position of a country measured by its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Conceição & Bandura, 2008). It is viewed as a description of the state of people's life situations (McGillivray, 2007). However, a more holistic definition of well-being consists of an individual's psychical, mental, social, and environmental status (Diener, 2009). The concept of Subjective Well-Being (SWB), commonly referred to as 'happiness', transcends the macroeconomic boundaries and incorporates theoretical underpinnings of psychology and behavioural sciences, and developed as a distinct construct in the well-being literature (Conceição & Bandura, 2008).

SWB is a multidimensional construct that emphasizes an individual's assessment of his or her own life, not the judgement of others. It includes *cognitive* judgements of life satisfaction and *affective* evaluations of emotions and moods (McGillivray & Clarke, 2006). SWB comprises three key components: emotions, life evaluation, and domain satisfaction (marriage, health, leisure, etc.) (Conceição & Bandura, 2008). SWB is a synonym of 'being happy' (the Aristotelian approach of happiness as eudaimonia). In contrast, concepts such as 'satisfaction' and 'happiness' are considered 'feeling happy' (a hedonic approach) (Bruni & Porta, 2005). The *hedonic* perspective refers to pleasure and enjoyment

of things, including, those related to physiological needs such as, food, shelter, and safety. The *eudaimonic* perspective, on the other hand, refers to human flourishing or realization of one's full potential, which is associated with doing virtuous things that are meaningful and that could bring fulfilment. It is the *eudaimonic* perspective that we must try to understand to develop vibrant mental energy, positive outlook, mental clarity, and a state of inner peace that relates to joyfulness (Maheshwari et al., 2022).

There is no clear consensus on what 'happiness' means. Although people may see happiness as a state of mind or a hedonistic state, material conditions and consumption have been identified as the key determinants of happiness (Easterlin, 1995, 2003). Other determinants include personal and family health, job satisfaction, fulfilling family life, and personal character (Frey & Stutzer, 2002; Steptoe et al., 2015). There are different approaches to measuring happiness, for example, subjective measures (self-reports about how happy they feel), objective measures (a physiological approach which measures the brain waves), and experience sampling measures (sampling people's moods and emotions several times a day for a prolonged time). People report being happy when they feel they are doing 'the right thing', whether the right thing is determined by ethics, principles, religion, custom, or social context (Conceição & Bandura, 2008, p. 18). Previous research found a positive association between religious intensity and SWB (Dilmaghani, 2018). Webb (2009) found that the Tibetan people are generally satisfied with life, despite the extreme harshness of their circumstances, and their faith in Buddhist philosophy is a strong basis for their satisfaction. A cross-sectional study that investigated the relationship between spirituality and SWB among 235 Ghanaian older adults found that spirituality is positively related to life satisfaction (Aglozo et al., 2021).

Although there are many antecedents affecting SWB, basic needs must be met at a fundamental level, and a certain income level is needed to improve happiness levels (Drakopoulos & Grimani, 2013). However, once people move beyond a certain income threshold, it generates equivalent growth in material aspirations; this negatively affects SWB undercutting the positive effect of income increase (Easterlin, 2001; Roszkowski & Grable, 2007). Furthermore, as income increases, people demand better quality of life with such concerns as friends, a good family life, quality of living spaces, and environmental protection (Clark et al., 2008; Maheshwari et al., 2022).

In the next section, we focus on the key constructs related to our conceptual underpinning. We start with WLB literature and extend the discussion to cognitive and behavioural dimensions of construal level theory, hedonic adaptation, and eastern perspectives related to higher consciousness. Then, in the next section, we integrate these distinct domains to develop an integrative model to sustain the SWB.

Work-Life-Balance

Investigations in the field of the work–life interface have gained drastic momentum in the previous decades (Naseem et al., 2020). WLB is defined as maintaining a sense of harmony in life (Clarke et al., 2004) with minimal role conflict (Clark, 2000). WLB is about responding to individual circumstances to help individuals fulfil their responsibilities and aspirations for the mutual benefit of the individual, business, and society (Chandra, 2012). Although literature related to work–non-work balance has established the bidirectional meaning of conflict and enrichment (i.e. work-to-family conflict or enrichment; family-to-work-enrichment), there is less consensus about the term balance (Casper et al., 2018). More recent definitions identify two different views related to balance: one view suggests that it is a *psychological* construct held in the mind of a focal person, and the other view states it is a *relational* construct that can be observed by others (Casper et al., 2018).

Valcour (2007) defined and measured 'satisfaction with work–family balance' as an attitude of 'an overall level of contentment resulting from an assessment of one's degree of success at meeting work and family role demands' (p. 1512). Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) argue that work–family balance is not an attitude that exists in the eye of the beholder but is embedded in a person's social environment. They conceptualized balance as a relational construct, defining it as 'the accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his/her role-related partners in the work and family domain' (p. 458). However, WLB literature often uses balance as a psychological construct and conceptualizes it as a person's psychological tendency to retain clear demarcation and allocation of the right proportion of time to the various demands of the personal and professional lives, consequentially leading towards the equilibrium in life with the least role conflict (Clark, 2000; Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007).

The temporal dimension has been identified as one of the key variables in determining work–life balance (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022; Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). The WLB literature has tended to rely upon the quantitative measures of time, for example, hours worked per week as the primary independent variable predicting work–life balance (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022; Roberts, 2008; Thompson & Bunderson, 2001). Previous studies found that long working hours were associated with role ambiguity and role conflict (Sonnentag & Kruel, 2006); poor health (Bauer et al., 2009; Virtanen et al., 2012); poor quality of life, and low levels of occupational well-being (Geurts et al., 2009; Li et al., 2015; Maruyama & Morimoto, 1996; Safstrom & Hartig, 2013). A recent study conducted among 369 respondents working in high-tech and banking industries revealed significant correlations between long working hours and occupational stress, WLB, and job satisfaction (Ya-Yuan et al., 2019). They further highlighted a significant positive interaction between perceived time control, working hours, and occupational stress. Furthermore, they found that those participants who reported having high perceived control over time were less prone to report having highly stressful workloads or long working hours.

Thompson and Bunderson (2001) suggest a research approach that recognizes the finite value of time and the *nature* of our activities. They present a metaphor of 'time as a container of meaning' to argue that time is fixed (like the container) in the sense that an hour spent at work can never be reclaimed for non-work pursuits and vice versa. This is followed by the *nature* of activities that occupy our time (things inside the container). For example, one can fill the container with good things, bad things, a lot of different items, and or one item and leave it empty. This approach highlights that when individuals spend their time in identify-affirming activities, whether it is related to work or non-work interests, they tend to perceive less conflict between life domains.

The container metaphor provides a simplistic viewpoint in relation to what is fixed and what is not, and what is in control and what is not. Therefore, by adjusting to what one can change, it is easier to maintain the WLB. However, this notion of balance implies that every situation is similar and stable and involves certain measures of work and life. Other researchers think that life situations are dynamic and cannot be adequately presented as a static balanced state (Burton, 2004; Moen & Sweet, 2004; Polach, 2003). Burton (2004) provides a good analogy for this dynamic state by using a balancing act of a gymnast. A gymnast is actually in a

state of continual shifts in which 'muscles are always moving, priorities are shifting'. In essence, WLB is not a fixed state but a state that needs constant adaptation to the situation and respond effectively to what is available in the present moment. Therefore, our decisions in the present moment decide the future outcomes related to how effectively one can achieve WLB. The temporal framing of the present situation has an effect on how one perceives the rate of change and the extent of change in a future state.

Construal Level Theory

'People directly experience only the here and now' (Trope & Liberman, 2010, p. 440). It is impossible to experience the past or the future. However, our direct experiences populate our minds with thoughts, emotions, and feelings related to all three temporal frames and guide our choice and action. Construal level theory (CLT) proposes that we transcend here and now by forming abstract mental construals of distal objects (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Literature related to the psychological effects of temporal distance assumes that the value of outcomes is discounted or diminished over time (Liberman & Trope, 1998).

Further insight into this construct's meaning can be found in the theoretical lens developed by Liberman and Trope (1998). CLT (Liberman & Trope, 1998; Trope & Liberman, 2003) proposes that people construct different representations of the same information depending on whether the information pertains to a near or a distant future. 'Psychological distance is thus egocentric: Its reference point is the self, here and now, and the different ways in which an object might be removed from that point—in time, space, social distance, and hypotheticality—constitute different distance dimensions' (Trope & Liberman, 2010, p. 440).

Psychological distance generally has a common meaning in relation to spatial distance, temporal distance, social distance, and hypotheticality. Trope and Liberman (2010, p. 440) explain how this common meaning is automatically applied to different types of distances, 'for example, on a rainy day, it matters whether an umbrella one notices belongs to a friend or to a stranger (social distance); in the jungle, it is important whether a tiger is real or imaginary (hypotheticality); in making a financial investment, it is important whether a recession is anticipated in the near or distant future (temporal distance), here or somewhere else (spatial distance)' (Trope & Liberman, 2010, p. 444). They point out

that although psychological distance and construal levels are related, they are not the same. Psychological distance refers to the perception of *when, where, and to whom* an event occurs and *whether* it occurs. Construal levels refer to the perception of *what* will occur.

CLT argues that when the psychological distance increases, it leads to high construal features (abstract and decontextualized representations that extract essential features of events), and the temporal distance is greater (e.g. a high school student's desire to become a medical doctor). When high-level construal features change, they produce major changes in the meaning of the event. In essence, high construal features represent the big picture. In contrast, low-level construal features are richer, subordinate, and contextualized (e.g. a high school student preparing for his or her exam). Low-construal features are related to near-future events, and changes to these features produce relatively minor changes in the meaning of the event. CLT proposes 'that the same information is constructed at a higher level when the information pertains to distant-future events than when it pertains to near-future events' (Trope & Liberman, 2003, p. 405). To illustrate: a person thinking about starting a new business venture five years from now might think in terms of more superordinate goals, such as 'introducing a value creating solution to an existing problem', whereas a person thinking about starting a venture in a few weeks' time might be construing it in terms of more subordinate and concrete goals, such as 'purchasing raw materials'. In essence, high-level construal (e.g. a higher goal) concerns the reasons 'why' one does something. In contrast, low-level construal (e.g. intention) reflects 'how' one is doing something in order to attain a higher goal (Förster et al., 2004).

CLT theory highlights desirability and feasibility as key elements in temporal framing, affecting alternative action causes (Liberman & Trope, 1998). Desirability, reflecting the superordinate 'why' aspects of an action, is hypothesized to be a primary reason to act, especially for distant future scenarios (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). It also focuses on the valence of an action's end state or the value of a particular goal outcome rather than on the process of valuation (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). Feasibility involves the means used to reach the end state (a low-level construal feature).

Perugini and Bagozzi (2004, p. 71) state that 'a key causal element leading to intention formation and action is the personal motivation (i.e. desire) to achieve an end state and not an inherent objective property of the end state itself (i.e. desirability)'. What this means is that it is

not the desirability of getting something that causes someone to act towards getting it but his or her *desire* to have it. Perugini and Bagozzi's (2004) work is important for two reasons. First, their study found that desires and intentions are two distinct constructs. They are different because they represent different levels of perceived performability, action-connectedness, and temporal framing; for example, unlike intentions, desires are less performable, are less connected to actions, and are enacted over longer time frames. Perugini and Bagozzi (2004, p. 71) define desire as 'a state of mind whereby an agent has a personal motivation to perform an action or to achieve a goal'. Second, desires are important predictors and act as the primary determinant of the corresponding intentions.

Although goals have a longer-term focus, they are also bound to change due to a reduction in the affective intensity of the goal. The nature of this change is discussed next under the concept of hedonic adaptation.

Hedonic Adaptation

Hedonic Adaptation (HA) can be defined as a reduction in the affective intensity of favourable and unfavourable circumstances across time (Frederick & Loewenstein, 1999). Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2012) state that 'the pleasure of success and the ignominy of failure abate with time. So does the thrill of a new sports car, the pain over a failed romance, the delight over a promotion, and the distress of a scary diagnosis' (p. 670). However, the literature on negative life events, especially when there is an adverse life event such as unemployment, disability, divorce, and widowhood the well-being decreases substantially, and one may not recover completely (Lucas, 2005; Lucas & Clark, 2006; Lucas et al., 2004; Uglanova & Staudinger, 2013).

The literature on HA to positive life changes is relatively scarce (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2012). The most commonly cited study from Brickman and his colleagues (Brickman et al., 1978) found that after 18 months, the lottery winners were in the same mental state in relation to happiness as the ones who had experienced no such windfall. Researchers found that people return to baseline happiness levels (the state where they were before the event) two years after the marriage and one year after getting a promotion (Boswell et al., 2005; Lucas & Clark, 2006). In short, both the happiness and sorrow of life events are short-lived.

However, Hedonic Adaptation Prevention (HAP) model proposed by Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2012) suggests two paths leading to changes in well-being. The first path involves an emotional perspective on well-being. When a person is initially exposed to a change event that generates positive emotions, the intensity of these emotions becomes less and less frequent over time and may cease altogether. For example, one may experience a series of positive change events after buying a new house. However, those occasions become less frequent over time, and the positive emotions (excitement, happiness, pride, etc.) will become less frequent and intense. The second path involves changes to the aspirational level. For example, one may aspire to become a celebrity, and when that person reaches that level, it will yield regular positive episodes and emotions. However, although their aspiration level regarding the expected quality of life has now increased, she will crave even more popularity. Thus, adapting to their new positive experience requires a new level to maintain their initial happiness.

Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2012) argue that it is possible to forestall the process by maintaining the variability and surprise inherent in the experiences. When there is continuous variability and surprise at the experiential level, one will maintain a continuous stream of positive emotions. However, their model also implies that when one continues to derive varying experiences from a change, they are less likely to fall prey to rising aspirations. Their model specifies that continued appreciation of the original life change and continued variety in change-related experiences contribute to forestalling the hedonic adaptation. In short, their findings support a key assumption of the Western notion that happiness might be fruitfully pursued and the 'quest for more' may be an essential driver of progress at the societal and individual levels. However, this is not a state that one can sustain (physically, mentally, socially, or financially), and there is continuous overdependence on external forces/sources/stimuli to maintain the 'happiness' level. Spirituality advocates that although we can pursue happiness in the material world, it cannot be physically grasped or held on to. Therefore, the acquisition of material wealth does not guarantee our happiness in the long run.

Towards Developing a Conceptual Model

We assert that it is possible to achieve a sustainable level of happiness and WLB, but not through material consumption (using things) or using external sources (people, money, status, recognition). It can instead be achieved by developing 'the mind'. We use the *eudaimonic* perspective to understand what happiness means and identify happiness in relation to vibrant mental energy, mental clarity, and a state of inner peace related to joyfulness (Maheshwari et al., 2022). Such a state requires a desire to connect with ultimate reality and transcendence for the highest human potential. In essence, it is about spiritual growth, understanding the nature of being, and experiencing the spirit within individuals as being pure. This state of awareness goes beyond the ordinary waking consciousness and leads to harmony and oneness with the universe (Edinger-Schons, 2020).

Even though the notion of spirituality has been conceptualized in association with religions, it is also conceptualized independently of religious affiliations (Melé & Fontrodona, 2017). Religion is generally referred to as an organized belief system (GÖÇEr & ÖZĞAn, 2018), and religion is a form that spirituality takes into practice (Guillory, 2000). His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, states: 'Spirituality, I take to be concerned with those qualities of the human spirit such as love and compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, a sense of responsibility, a sense of harmony – which bring happiness to both self and others' (Gyatso, 2001, p. 22).

Spirituality is an individual pursuit that leads to an existential understanding of 'who am I' and 'why am I here' (Neal, 2000). Furthermore, a sense of purpose and meaning in life are dominant elements of spirituality, and a lack of meaning and purpose in life consistently correlates with a lack of psychological well-being (De Klerk et al., 2006; Keyes, 2011). At the heart of spirituality lies purity of mind. What is valued in spirituality is not the quality of the mind which contributes to generating material wealth. Instead, it values the qualities that contribute to loving relationships with others and the environment, selflessness, non-greediness, sharing, cooperation, forgiveness, non-violence, and activities that aim to serve others without expecting anything in return. Mind development based on such values of spirituality leads to a deeper understanding of what 'reality' is, thus creating a state of consciousness that transcends the self, time and space.

The work, life and social domains are interconnected and cannot be separated using time and space. The only way to cross this boundary of time and space is to understand the illusion of matter that acts as the source of time and space. Although, Western scientists are beginning to understand that matter is energy and different energies (such as electricity, magnetism, and gravity) are fundamentally unified in nature and cannot be localized in time and space (Nader, 2021). The knowledge about the relative nature of time and space and the role of consciousness were not new to sages and yogis who lived thousands of years ago. For example, ancient knowledge in Veda describes the source of all the physical and material as a field of consciousness, and it is consciousness that appears as matter. There is one grand field of consciousness that is entirely non-physical and non-material (Nader, 2021). The Chinese sages so long ago conceived the concept of 'Great Unity', referring to oneness and connectedness, where they see a world of sameness, a universe as life, everything is life, and life is everything (Tsao, 2021). In the Buddhist Pali Scripters, *Kewatta sutta*, a monk asks a question from Buddha about where the 'material' elements cease to exist, then Buddha answers:

> 'Your question should not be phrased in this way: Where do these four great elements — the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property — cease without remainder? Instead, it should be phrased like this:
>
> Where do water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing? Where are long & short, coarse & fine, fair & foul, name & form brought to an end? And the answer to that is: Consciousness without feature, without end, luminous all around: Here water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing. Here long & short coarse & fine, fair & foul, name & form are all brought to an end. With the cessation of [the activity of] consciousness, each is here brought to an end'.[1]

This answer from Buddha indicates that manifestations of material (form) and immaterial (name) depend on consciousness. This assertion is similar to Nader's (2021) explanation of consciousness. He states that consciousness is the absolute reality. Relative reality is made of an observer and an observed participating together in the process of consciousness. When

[1] "Kevatta (Kevaddha) Sutta: To Kevatta" (DN 11), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight (BCBS Edition)*, 30 November 2013, http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.11.0.than.html.

any component of a triple (observer, observing, observed) has the value of zero, which represents the absence of a specific role of consciousness, the triple is defined as only a concept, something that can be entertained but does not truly exist.

Seeing Things as They Are

Our approach to achieving sustained WLB and SWB is based on achieving a higher state of consciousness, on seeing things as they are instead of our versions of conditioned reality. Meditation, mindfulness, in particular, is one form of achieving that. Mindfulness meditation aims to purify the mind by understanding the way of consciousness by removing the covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world (sensory stimuli), thus leading to a state of transcendent bliss and peace (Bodhi, 2011). The right practice of mindfulness involves the reflexive contemplation of one's own experience, subsumed under the four objective domains of the body, feelings, states of mind, and experiential phenomena (Bodhi, 2011). Mindful attention is intricately wound up in the present moment through cultivating a deeper conscious awareness of the four objective domains so the mind can stay calm, balanced, and in harmony no matter the circumstances (Pavlovich, 2010).

At the fundamental level, our experiences manifest as bodily and mental (thoughts and perceptions) feelings. Our perceptions about these experiences lay the foundations for our subsequent thoughts and future actions. Our current experiences can be condensed into three kinds of feelings: pleasant, painful, and neither-painful-nor-pleasant (neutral). The present-moment experiences (such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, tactile sensation, and thoughts) are the most basic level of human consciousness. For example, seeing a rose may bring a pleasurable feeling to one's mind. This outcome is based on two factors, past information (a rose is a beautiful flower) and the act of seeing. Suppose there is only seeing (the activity of seeing) without the past information. In that case, there is nothing to see and no seer. Because the activity of 'seeing' is not associated with anything or anyone. Therefore, this experience creates a neutral feeling. Although there is no anger or aversion towards neutral feelings, we get deluded in neutral feelings. Thus, entertaining the thought 'I am seeing', 'I am experiencing'. This is what closes the door to developing pure consciousness. Here is an excerpt from the Pali cannon in the Buddhist literature to highlight this process:

> 'Then, Bāhiya, you should train yourself thus: In reference to the seen, there will be only the seen. In reference to the heard, only the heard. In reference to the sensed, only the sensed. In reference to the cognized, only the cognized. That is how you should train yourself. When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen, only the heard in reference to the heard, only the sensed in reference to the sensed, only the cognized in reference to the cognized, then, Bāhiya, there is no you in connection with that. When there is no you in connection with that, there is no you there. When there is no you there, you are neither here nor there nor between the two. This, just this, is the end of stress'.[2]

The above passage outlines the simple fact of the ultimate reality. In order to develop situational awareness concerning a life event here and now, one must pay attention to three things: (1) to pre-existing conditions (past knowledge), (2) to what one is doing in relation to those conditions, and (3) to the results that come from one's actions (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 1996). This threefold focus enables one to monitor one's actions and act accordingly with an understanding of the consequences of such actions.

In addition to taking necessary action to deal with the present situation (low construal feature), such as WLB and SWB, one must have a superordinate goal of connecting with the ultimate reality. Achieving a sustainable WLB and SWB are outcomes of a high construal feature (connecting with the ultimate reality) representing the big picture. High construal goals have long time frames and facilitate self-control. A person's situational awareness thus leads to a clear comprehension of the nature of the phenomena presented here and now, and also the long-term goal achievement.

However, the outcome of a skilful situational awareness leads to a clear understanding of the impermanent nature of life events, whether they are related to high or low construal level events. For example, although a gymnast is in a state of continual shifts in which 'muscles are always moving, priorities are shifting' a (low construal feature) or getting ready to make another big move (a high construal feature), they eventually come to an end. As per the Buddhist teaching, the impermanence of all phenomena can be contextualized in the impermanence of life itself

[2] "Bāhiya Sutta: Bāhiya" (Ud 1.10), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight (BCBS Edition)*, 3 September 2012, http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.1.10.than.html.

(Rāhula, 2006). With a deep-rooted understanding of the impermeant nature of events and experiences, one sees adaptation as a natural occurrence. This knowledge leads to understanding the meaning of 'balance' in life.

The meaning of SWB of a person and the meaning of balance cannot be presented with an objective point of view, as they are individual-oriented and context-dependent. However, by grounding on the current literature, we can identify the following three underlying expectations that will influence sustaining the WLB and SWB:

- An overall sense of contentment in life
- Ability to fulfil aspirations
- Minimal role conflict and increased ability to fulfil responsibilities

The overall sense of contentment in life: we measure our contentment level based on one's condition compared to an external reference standard (social comparison, social or cultural construction) or to one's aspirations (McDowell, 2006). The problem with this comparison is that when we compare our current condition or the quality of life according to external standards, we only find the baseline level of standard that is relative to the current situation. When the situation changes, then the standards also change. Reflecting on Easterlin's (1995) work, Conceição and Bandura (2008) state, '*one of the key arguments for the Easterlin paradox is that happiness depends on relative consumption, in addition to absolute consumption'* (2008, p. 17). Schmittz (1930) posits that people are deemed happier when the gap between standards and reality is small. In other words, the happiest state of being is a state of being without desires. Contentment can only be achieved when we see life as it is (as a mind-made conditioned state) instead of comparing standards of how life should be (Rojas & Veenhoven, 2013). This can be achieved when one is appropriately grounded on the knowledge of 'impermanence' and perceive adaptation as a natural occurrence.

Ability to fulfil aspirations: Our aspirational levels are formed by two main processes (Stutzer, 2004). The first one is related to social comparison, i.e. one's position relative to others. The second one is related to our adaptation to previous change events or consumption levels. These two situations always influence how our aspirations are formed. Stutzer (2004) provides empirical evidence for the effect of income aspirations on

individual well-being. He found that 'higher income aspirations reduce people's satisfaction with life. This suggests that SWB depends only on the gap between income aspirations and actual income and not on the income level. Thus, the higher the ratio between aspired income and actual income, the less satisfied people are with their life, ceteris paribus' (p. 105). This can be applied to any kind of aspiration and is an important finding that highlights the relationship between our aspirations and satisfaction level. If our aspirations are materialistic and based on social comparison, they are always bound to change, ultimately bringing unhappiness. Instead, if our aspirations are directed at universal love, oneness and connection with the ultimate reality, we remove the basis of our comparison.

Minimizing role conflict and fulfilling responsibilities: Role conflict refers to 'the extent to which a person experiences pressures within one role that are incompatible with the pressures that arise within another role' (Kopelman et al., 1983, p. 201). A seminal study by Coverman (1989) found that role conflict decreased men's job satisfaction and marital satisfaction and increased psychophysical symptoms in women. Similarly, Schaufeli et al. (2009) found that role conflict fully mediates the relationships between workaholism, burnout, and well-being. Role conflict leads to work–family conflicts and vice versa. This situation has to be actively managed by developing self-awareness and time management (Bruening & Dixon, 2007) and a family-supportive work environment (Allen, 2001; Bruening & Dixon, 2007). Our roles come with certain responsibilities attached to them. Whether our roles are related to work and family, we have role responsibilities as job holders, parents, community leaders, or simply as human beings. For some, 'life' involves responsibilities related to activities that are important to them, such as hobbies, education, exercise, religious or community activities, and other types of caring (Kelliher et al., 2019). When individuals play multiple roles, their responsibilities increase accordingly, and role conflicts compound the situation's complexity. When the goal is directed at transcendence and connection with the ultimate reality, our multiple roles converge into 'Life' and 'Being'. Life consists of all the roles we play by being in the human world. 'Being' is about our experience of here and now.

The sense of contentment in life and one's aspirations have a higher psychological distance compared to role conflicts and fulfilling responsibilities. They exhibit high construal features, and the temporal distance

is higher. For example, when our sense of contentment in life changes, they produce major changes in the meaning of the event. We assert that it is possible to sustain WLB when one appreciates the impermanent nature of life events. For example, contrary to what is predicted by the HAP model, one must understand that it is not possible to sustain positive change through variability and surprise. For example, the difference between buying a house and buying tailored cloth are only two positive emotional events. The only difference is related to their temporal framing. One may generate a longer period of positive emotions than the other. However, they will eventually cease to generate the same effect after a certain period.

Our conceptual model is grounded on the annals of the premise of higher consciousness and purity of mind. We deviate from the Western approach to developing sustainable WLB or SWB based on variety and surprise. We assert that trying to continuously add variety and surprises to our life events to maintain a heightened level of positive emotions is not practically achievable and not a natural state of being. Our conceptual model is presented in Fig. 7.1.

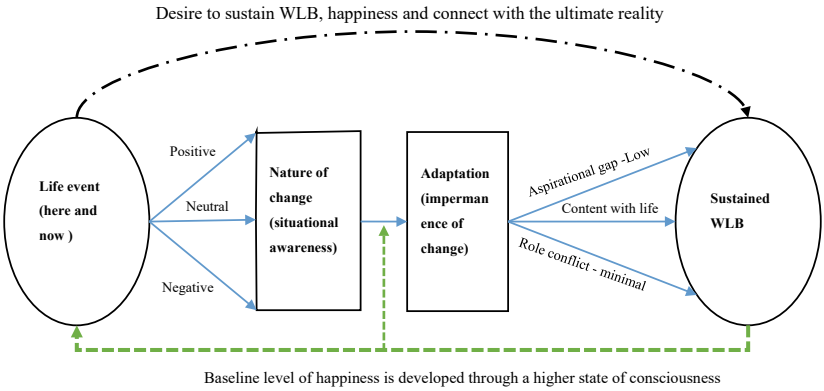


Fig. 7.1 Achieving SWB through sustained WLB

Conclusion

In today's dynamic working environment achieving WLB and SWB is one of life's priorities. Although Western theoretical models related to WLB suggest various methods to achieve WLB, they do not adequately address the underlying tendencies that contribute to why we cannot sustain WLB in the first place. This results in a state where one can achieve and sustain SWB. In this chapter, we developed a theoretical conceptualization that, in order to achieve sustained WLB and SWB, one must have the desire to achieve a higher state of consciousness as a part of their life goal, one must understand the true nature of life events (i.e. they are impermanent, transient, and conditioned) and finally, one should focus on minimizing the gap of their aspirations, minimize role conflicts and be content with what life offers. Pure consciousness is always present in us, as it has no connection to material possessions. If the body is not in pain and the mind is not perturbed by positive or negative emotions, the neutral state of mind brings the highest level of happiness one can achieve.

References

Aglozo, E. Y., Akotia, C. S., Osei-Tutu, A., & Annor, F. (2021). Spirituality and subjective well-being among Ghanaian older adults: Optimism and meaning in life as mediators. *Aging and Mental Health, 25*(2), 306–315.

Allen, T. D. (2001). Family-supportive work environments: The role of organizational perceptions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 58*(3), 414–435.

Bauer, G. F., Huber, C. A., Jenny, G. J., Müller, F., & Hämmig, O. (2009). Socioeconomic status, working conditions and self-rated health in Switzerland: Explaining the gradient in men and women. *International Journal of Public Health, 54*(1), 23–30.

Bhikkhu, T. (1996). *The wings to awakening: An anthology of from the Pali Canon* (7th ed.). Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Bodhi, B. (2011). What does mindfulness really mean? *A Canonical Perspective. Contemporary Buddhism, 12*(1), 19–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2011.564813

Boswell, W. R., Boudreau, J. W., & Tichy, J. (2005). The relationship between employee job change and job satisfaction: The honeymoon-hangover effect. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*(5), 882.

Brickman, P., Coates, D., & Janoff-Bulman, R. (1978). Lottery winners and accident victims: Is happiness relative? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 36*(8), 917.

Bruening, J. E., & Dixon, M. A. (2007). Work-family conflict in coaching II: Managing role conflict. *Journal of Sport Management, 21*(4), 471–496. https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.21.4.471

Bruni, L., & Porta, P. L. (2005). *Economics and happiness: Framing the analysis*. Oxford University Press.

Burton, C. (2004). What does work-life balance mean anyway? *The Journal for Quality and Participation, 27*(3), 12.

Campo, A. M. D. V., Avolio, B., & Carlier, S. I. (2021). The relationship between telework, job performance, work-life balance and family supportive supervisor behaviours in the context of COVID-19. *Global Business Review*. https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509211049918

Casper, W. J., Vaziri, H., Wayne, J. H., DeHauw, S., & Greenhaus, J. (2018). The jingle-jangle of work–nonwork balance: A comprehensive and meta-analytic review of its meaning and measurement. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 103*(2), 182–214. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000259

Chan, X. W., Kalliath, T., Brough, P., Siu, O.-L., O'Driscoll, M. P., & Timms, C. (2016). Work–family enrichment and satisfaction: The mediating role of self-efficacy and work–life balance. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(15), 1755–1776. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1075574

Chandra, V. (2012). Work-life balance: Eastern and western perspectives. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management: Human Resource Management in the New Economy in India, 23*(5), 1040–1056. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2012.651339

Clark, A. E., Frijters, P., & Shields, M. A. (2008). Relative income, happiness, and utility: An explanation for the Easterlin paradox and other puzzles. *Journal of Economic Literature, 46*(1), 95–144.

Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations, 53*(6), 747–770.

Clarke, M. C., Koch, L. C., & Hill, E. J. (2004). The work-family interface: Differentiating balance and fit. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal, 33*(2), 121–140.

Conceição, P., & Bandura, R. (2008). Measuring subjective wellbeing: A summary review of the literature. *United nations development programme (UNDP) development studies, working paper*.

Coverman, S. (1989). Role overload, role conflict, and stress: Addressing consequences of multiple role demands. *Social Forces, 67*(4), 965–982.

Crouter, A. C. (1984). Spillover from family to work: The neglected side of the work-family interface. *Human Relations, 37*(6), 425–441.

De Cieri, H., Holmes, B., Abbott, J., & Pettit, T. (2005). Achievements and challenges for work/life balance strategies in Australian organizations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16*(1), 90–103.

De Klerk, J. J., Boshoff, A. B., & Van Wyk, R. (2006). Spirituality in practice: Relationships between meaning in life, commitment and motivation. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(4), 319–347.

Diener, E. (2009). *The science of welll-being*. Springer.

Dilmaghani, M. (2018). Religiosity and subjective wellbeing in Canada. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 19*(3), 629–647.

Drakopoulos, S. A., & Grimani, K. (2013). *Maslow's needs hierarchy and the effect of income on happiness levels*. Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis.

Du, D., Derks, D., & Bakker, A. B. (2018). Daily spillover from family to work: A test of the work–home resources model. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 23*(2), 237.

Easterlin, R. A. (1995). Will raising the incomes of all increase the happiness of all? *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 27*(1), 35–47.

Easterlin, R. A. (2001). Income and happiness: Towards a unified theory. *The Economic Journal, 111*(473), 465–484.

Easterlin, R. A. (2003). Explaining happiness. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 100*(19), 11176–11183.

Edinger-Schons, L. M. (2020). Oneness beliefs and their effect on life satisfaction. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 12*(4), 428.

Förster, J., Friedman, R. S., & Liberman, N. (2004). Temporal construal effects on abstract and concrete thinking: Consequences for insight and creative cognition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*(2), 177–189.

Frederick, S., & Loewenstein, G. (1999). 16 Hedonic adaptation. *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* (pp. 302–329).

Frey, B. S., & Stutzer, A. (2002). What can economists learn from happiness research? *Journal of Economic Literature, 40*(2), 402–435.

Geurts, S. A., Beckers, D. G., Taris, T. W., Kompier, M. A., & Smulders, P. G. (2009). Worktime demands and work-family interference: Does worktime control buffer the adverse effects of high demands? *Journal of Business Ethics, 84*(2), 229–241.

GÖÇEr, A., & ÖZĞAn, H. (2018). Spirituality and ethics: A literature review. *Ruhsallık Ve Etik: Bir Alanyazın Taraması., 17*, 58–65. https://doi.org/10.21547/jss.452152

Görgens-Ekermans, G., & Brand, T. (2012). Emotional intelligence as a moderator in the stress–burnout relationship: A questionnaire study on nurses. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 21*(15–16), 2275–2285.

Grzywacz, J. G., & Carlson, D. S. (2007). Conceptualizing work—Family Falance: Implications for practice and research. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 9*(4), 455–471.

Guillory, W. A. (2000). The living organization: Spirituality in the workplace. In *Salt lake city*, UT: Innovations International Inc.

Gyatso, T., His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. (2001). *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for the New Millennium*. London: Little, Brown and Company.

Hamilton Skurak, H., Malinen, S., Näswall, K., & Kuntz, J. C. (2021). Employee wellbeing: The role of psychological detachment on the relationship between engagement and work–life conflict. *Economic and Industrial Democracy, 42*(1), 116–141. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X17750473

Iacovoiu, V. B. (2020). Work-life balance between theory and practice. A comparative analysis. *Economic Insights—Trends & Challenges, 2*, 57–67. Retrieved from http://www.openpolytechnic.ac.nz/library/login?redirect=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ebscohost.com%2flogin.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26db%3dbth%26AN%3d144256399%26site%3dehost-live%26scope%3dsite

Kelliher, C., Richardson, J., & Boiarintseva, G. (2019). All of work? All of life? Reconceptualising work-life balance for the 21st century. *Human Resource Management Journal, 29*(2), 97–112. https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12215

Keyes, C. L. (2011). Authentic purpose: The spiritual infrastructure of life. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 8*(4), 281–297.

Kopelman, R. E., Greenhaus, J. H., & Connolly, T. F. (1983). A model of work, family, and interrole conflict: A construct validation study. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 32*(2), 198–215.

Li, X., Kan, D., Liu, L., Shi, M., Wang, Y., Yang, X., & Wu, H. (2015). The mediating role of psychological capital on the association between occupational stress and job burnout among bank employees in China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 12*(3), 2984–3001.

Liberman, N., & Trope, Y. (1998). The role of feasibility and desirability considerations in near and distant future decisions: A test of temporal construal theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*(1), 5–18.

Lucas, R. E. (2005). Time does not heal all wounds: A longitudinal study of reaction and adaptation to divorce. *Psychological Science, 16*(12), 945–950.

Lucas, R. E., & Clark, A. E. (2006). Do people really adapt to marriage? *Journal of Happiness Studies, 7*(4), 405–426.

Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2004). Unemployment alters the set point for life satisfaction. *Psychological Science, 15*(1), 8–13.

Maheshwari, A. K., Werd, M. R. P., Travis, F., Rainforth, M., & Lipman, J. (2022). Workplace well-being: An experimental investigation into benefits of consciousness-based architecture. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 19*(1), 73–92.

Maruyama, S., & Morimoto, K. (1996). Effects of long workhours on life-style, stress and quality of life among intermediate Japanese managers. *Scandinavian journal of work, environment & health* (pp. 353–359).

McDowell, I. (2006). *Measuring health: a guide to rating scales and questionnaires*: Oxford University Press.

McGillivray, M. (2007). Human well-being: Issues, concepts and measures. In *Human well-being* (pp. 1–22). Springer.

McGillivray, M., & Clarke, M. (2006). Human well-being: Concepts and measures. *Understanding human well-being* (pp. 3–16). Springer.

Melé, D., & Fontrodona, J. (2017). Christian ethics and spirituality in leading business organizations: Editorial introduction. *Journal of Business Ethics, 145*(4), 671–679.

Min, J. (2014). The relationships between emotional intelligence, job stress, and quality of life among tour guides. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 19*(10), 1170–1190.

Moen, P., & Sweet, S. (2004). From 'work–family'to 'flexible careers' A life course reframing. *Community, Work & Family, 7*(2), 209–226.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness: Simple answers to the big questions in life [Kindle version]*. Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, S. A.

Naseem, R., Faiz, R., & Asad, H. (2020). Investigating work-life balance among female academics. *Journal of Research & Reflections in Education (JRRE), 14*(1), 16–38. Retrieved from http://www.openpolytechnic.ac.nz/library/login?redirect=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ebscohost.com%2flogin.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26db%3dehh%26AN%3d144463013%26site%3dehost-live%26scope%3dsite

Neal, J. (2000). Work as service to the divine: Giving our gifts selflessly and with joy. *American Behavioral Scientist, 43*(8), 1316–1333.

Pavlovich, K. (2010). Educating for conscious awareness. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 7*(3), 193–208.

Pendleton, D., Derbyshire, P., & Hodgkinson, C. (2021). *Work-life matters : Crafting a new balance at work and at home*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Perugini, M., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2004). The distinction between desires and intentions. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 34*(1), 69–84. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.186

Polach, J. (2003). HRD's role in work-life integration issues: Moving the workforce to a change in mindset. *Human Resource Development International, 6*(1), 57–68.

Rāhula, W. (2006). *What the Buddha taught* (Vol. 641). The Buddhist Cultural Centre.

Rashmi, K., & Kataria, A. (2022). Work–life balance: A systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, 42*(11/12), 1028–1065. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-06-2021-0145

Roberts, E. (2008). Time and work-life balance: The roles of 'temporal customization' and 'life temporality.' *Gender, Work & Organization, 15*(5), 430–453. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2008.00412.x

Rojas, M., & Veenhoven, R. (2013). Contentment and affect in the estimation of happiness. *Social Indicators Research, 110*(2), 415–431.

Roszkowski, M. J., & Grable, J. (2007). How are income and net worth related to happiness? *Journal of Financial Service Professionals, 61*(1).

Ryan, F. V. C., Cruickshank, P., Hall, H., & Lawson, A. (2020). Blurred reputations: Managing professional and private information online. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, 52*(1), 16–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000618769977

Safstrom, M., & Hartig, T. (2013). Psychological detachment in the relationship between job stressors and strain. *Behavioral Sciences, 3*(3), 418–433.

Schaufeli, W., Bakker, A., van der Heijden, F. M. A., & Prins, J. (2009). Workaholism, burnout and well-being among junior doctors: The mediating role of role conflict. *Work & Stress, 23*(2), 155–172. https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370902834021

Schmittz, O. A. (1930). Glück und Lebenskunst (happiness and the art of living). *Psychologische Rundschau, 2*, 233–238.

Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2012). The challenge of staying happier: Testing the hedonic adaptation prevention model. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*(5), 670–680.

Sonnentag, S., & Kruel, U. (2006). Psychological detachment from work during off-job time: The role of job stressors, job involvement, and recovery-related self-efficacy. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 15*(2), 197–217.

Steptoe, A., Deaton, A., & Stone, A. A. (2015). Subjective wellbeing, health, and ageing. *The Lancet, 385*(9968), 640–648.

Stutzer, A. (2004). The role of income aspirations in individual happiness. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 54*(1), 89–109.

Tausig, M., & Fenwick, R. (2001). Unbinding time: Alternate work schedules and work-life balance. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues, 22*, 101–119.

Thompson, J. A., & Bunderson, J. S. (2001). Work-nonwork conflict and the phenomenology of time: Beyond the balance metaphor. *Work and Occupations, 28*(1), 17–39.

Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2003). Temporal construal. *Psychological Review, 110*(3), 403–421.

Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2010). Construal-level theory of psychological distance. *Psychological Review, 117*(2), 440.

Tsao, F. C. (2021). The science of life and wellbeing: Integrating the new science of consciousness with the ancient science of consciousness. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 7–18. https://doi.org/10.51327/TFOJ1047

Uglanova, E. A., & Staudinger, U. M. (2013). Zooming in on life events: Is hedonic adaptation sensitive to the temporal distance from the event? *Social*

Indicators Research, 111(1), 265–286. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.otago.ac.nz/stable/24719142

Valcour, M. (2007). Work-based resources as moderators of the relationship between work hours and satisfaction with work-family balance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(6), 1512.

Virtanen, M., Heikkilä, K., Jokela, M., Ferrie, J. E., Batty, G. D., Vahtera, J., & Kivimäki, M. (2012). Long working hours and coronary heart disease: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *American Journal of Epidemiology, 176*(7), 586–596.

Webb, D. (2009). Subjective wellbeing on the Tibetan plateau: An exploratory investigation. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10*(6), 753.

Ya-Yuan, H., Chyi-Huey, B., Chien-Ming, Y., Huang, Y.-C., Lin, T.-T., & Lin, C.-H. (2019). Long hours' effects on work-life balance and satisfaction. *BioMed Research International, 2019*,. https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/5046934

Zedeck, S. (1992). Introduction: Exploring the domain of work and family concerns. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *Frontiers of industrial and organizational psychology* (Vol. 5): Jossey-Bass.

CHAPTER 8

Global Leadership Under Oneness: Connecting Conscious Parts to Conscientious Wholes

Alex Fong and Duysal Askun Celik

Introduction

Today we are living in a global World which has increasingly become a shared space whether or not we like it. There is an inescapable reality that is surrounding us: whatever ideas we have, whatever sickness we might experience or any type of good acts we commit to will be global pursuits from day one. Businesses operate this way (Isenberg, 2008), the societies function this way, albeit inevitably. The world in the past allowed more room for separate existence without a necessary influential factor getting in the way of that sort of being, whatever it might entail. The

A. Fong (✉)
Hong Kong Business School, Hong Kong, China
e-mail: afong.tap@gmail.com

D. Askun Celik
Jones School of Business, Rice University, Houston, TX, USA
e-mail: da47@rice.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_8

world today and tomorrow will have to encompass a global outlook at our minds, hearts, and bodies. The institutions will have to embrace this global presence with all of its negative as well as positive repercussions. The businesses will need to incorporate this global lens in their strategy-making as well as in their praxis. This global lens, unless it is inclusive, diverse, and interconnected, is doomed to fail.

Enterprises exist to create value to stakeholders. This paper examines how oneness might be deployed as an approach to help business leaders manage enterprise governance, enterprise well-being, and enterprise sustainability.

In Part One of this paper, we will examine the role oneness can play as a philosophical resource to cultivate self–others interaction patterns in an organization. In Part Two of the paper, we will examine the role oneness can play as a psychological resource in support of leadership and followership. In Part Three, we will examine how oneness, as a learning organization praxis, can be deployed to cultivate organizational practices that can help to better manage interconnectedness among stakeholders in an organization.

Part One: Oneness as a Philosophical Resource

Culture plays a pivotal role in influencing interconnectedness and self–others interaction patterns in the context of a global enterprise, with leaders and followers coming from different cultural traditions. Global North has evolved into its characteristic "I "centered culture that has been described as "WEIRD" (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) whereas Global South-East has evolved into its characteristic "we" centered culture that has been described as "Non-WEIRD" (Henrich et al., 2010). WEIRD culture focuses on the parts whereas non-WEIRD culture focuses on the whole. R. Shweder (1991) offered an explanation of why the concept of self differs so much across cultures: all societies have to resolve the question of how to balance the needs of the individual and those of society. Under the WEIRD/Western notion of oneness, individualistic centricity is the order in society, where individuals are placed at the center and society is made a servant of the individual. In sociocentric societies, the needs of groups and institutions are placed at the center and individuals' needs are subordinate to the needs of the groups and institutions (Shweder, 1991). J. Haidt (2006)took this further to delineate a culture that is driven by the ethic

of autonomy (where individuals come first) versus one driven by the ethic of community (where the roles to be played by individuals come first). Under a community-driven ethic, the moral code emphasizes self-control, resistance to temptation, and cultivation of one's higher noble self while keeping one's selfish desires under restraint. The Non-WEIRD/East Asian notion of oneness encompasses a more expansive version of the self and has its roots in the works of Confucians, Daoists, and Buddhists. Confucians and Daoists represent competing but also complementary alternatives within Chinese culture. Confucianism is primarily about civilization, culture, rules, and formality, whereas Daoism is primarily about spontaneity, independence, and an anti-authoritarian "back to nature" spirit. From the perspective of Chinese *yin-yang* thinking, Confucianism can be characterized as *yang* (masculine and assertive), which is classical and public, stressing conformity and convergence, while Daoism can be characterized as *yin* (feminine and quiet) which is jazzy and private, stressing non-conformity and diversity (Lobel, 2018).

In the introductory chapter of *the oneness hypothesis*, *beyond the boundary of self* (Ivanhoe et al., 2018), there are many alternative conceptions of self to be found from different disciplines including religion, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, politics, etc. According to some views, these conceptions of the "self" are linked up to conceptions of "others" in different ways. In virtuous organizational studies, self–others interaction patterns in an organization are examined under the virtuous behavior of individuals in organizational settings. The concept of virtuousness has been defined in a variety of ways, for example, as good for its own sake, as the best of the human condition, as the most functional attribute for the human species and as personal and social betterment (Shklar, 1992; MacIntyre, 1984; Weiner, 1993). In psychological and organizational research studies, proxies for organizational virtuousness have included business ethics, corporate social responsibility, corporate sustainability, corporate citizenship, and pro-social behavior (George, 1991; McNeely & Meglino, 1994; Piliavin & Charng, 1990). In the ethics literature, the dominant emphasis has been on avoiding harm, fulfilling contracts, and compliance with the law (Handelsman et al., 2009). Legality refers to what the law permits or what it does not explicitly forbid. In the corporate social responsibility and corporate sustainability literature, activities considered as contributing to organizational virtuousness are typically understood as motivated by instrumental benefit or exchange relationships. However, there is increasing awareness

that organizational virtuousness is closely related to responsible leadership. In his CSR2.0 model, Visser identified five phases of evolution in the literature under the domains of corporate social responsibility and corporate sustainability: the age of greed, the age of philanthropy, the age of marketing, the age of management, and the age of responsibility. His DNA model of CSR 2.0 identified four responsibility bases (DNA codes): good governance (leadership and institutional effectiveness), value creation (impact on economic ecosystems), societal contribution (impact on stakeholder ecosystems), and environmental sustainability (impact on environmental ecosystems) (Visser, 2011). By equating virtuousness with responsible leadership, Cameron drew attention to responsible leadership being a process that connects value creation to impact assessment (Cameron, 2011, Mainardes et al., 2012). This is what oneness seeks to do when considering interconnections under leadership and followership.

Oneness to Bridge the Confluence Point Between the WEIRD and Non-WEIRD Cultural Traditions in an Organization

Oneness deals with the relationships between the parts and the wholes. Enterprises can be considered to be systems made up of individual parts and subsystems. Leadership and followership under the WEIRD culture tend to believe more in active primary control and exert their influence through changing existing realities, whereas leadership and followership under the non-WEIRD culture are more inclined to emphasize secondary control and harmony and exert their influence through working around existing social realities The oneness perspective postulates that everything is interrelated to everything and investigates how highlighting and developing certain kinds of interconnections can bring about improvements to both the individual part and the larger wholes of which they are parts (Ivanhoe, 2017).

> In various ways, the self is inextricably intertwined with, a part of, or in some sense identical with the rest of the world. In recent interdisciplinary work, this general idea has been described as the *oneness hypothesis*. The relationship between the self and the rest of the world at issue is more than the simple claim that we are connected with other people, creatures, and

> things - a claim that is not only in some sense obviously true but practically and morally ambiguous. At times, we find ourselves connected with other parts of the world to which we would strongly prefer not to be connected and have no obligation to be so united (think of malignant bacteria or tumors). The connections the oneness hypothesis advocates are those that conduce to the health, benefit, and improvement of both individuals and the larger wholes of which they are a part. (Ivanhoe et al., 2018, p. 1)

Under this pragmatic imperative, the oneness hypothesis, when applied to the study of virtuousness in organizations, can be deployed as a guide for the CEOs to construct self–others interaction experiences among the stakeholders**.** This approach does not presuppose pure altruism (in a deontological sense), nor does it condone instrumentalism (in the utilitarian sense). What it seeks to do is to clarify the self–others interaction experience patterns between internal stakeholders within an enterprise and the self–others interaction experience patterns among external stakeholders, so as to assess the implications of such patterns of interaction on enterprise well-being and enterprise sustainability. The former contributes to vertical alignment, which seeks to align the enterprise purpose, mission, strategy, and activities with the behavior of employers and employees; the latter contributes to horizontal alignment, which aligns the enterprise with external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and the wider community (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1997).

Oneness can be deployed to bridge the confluence point between the WEIRD and non-WEIRD traditions in the cultural tapestry of the organization. Assimilating the virtuous organizational approach (as suggested by Cameron) with the oneness hypothesis (as suggested by Ivanhoe) encourages stakeholders engaged with the organization to think beyond the boundaries of the self in internal stakeholder management and the boundary of the enterprise in stakeholder management to the good of the wider community, environment, and other parts of the world.

Having outlined how oneness can be deployed to close the boundaries gap in stakeholder management from a macro perspective in Part One, we will now turn to Part Two which provides an elaboration on how this bridging process can be amplified from a micro perspective.

Part Two: Oneness as a Psychological Resource

Consciousness within and Between: The Interconnectedness Principle

Consciousness Within

The Latin root of the Word "individual" is individuum which means *an indivisible thing*. The indivisible nature of any being connotes a unity-based notion of mind, body, and soul. An influential factor that could be underlying this capacity, or a competence thereof, could be *consciousness*. There have been many attempts so far to define what consciousness might be. In his most recent book "One unbounded ocean of consciousness", Nader (2021) stated that consciousness has two meanings, especially in Romance languages such as Spanish, French, and Italian. One meaning referred to morality which translates into "conscience" in English. The second meaning is referred to as "awareness and wakefulness". Nader (2021) further argues that ancient knowledge in Vedanta teaches that the source of all the physical and material is the field of consciousness. Therefore, he concludes that consciousness is the basis of all matter and energy combined. And it is consciousness that creates matter or appears as matter. In other words, Nader (2021) says, consciousness is all there is. Similarly, Anil Maheshwari (Maheshwari, 2021, 2023; Maheshwari & Gupta, 2018) proposed a V-theory of transcendence that encompasses a two-step model which connects discrete elements to pure consciousness. According to this theory, a human would be living in a surface-level reality. There are many contemplative practices, using which there is a possibility to transcend to pure consciousness.

In its simplest form, we define consciousness as an awareness of that which happens inside (Aşkun, 2020) and outside. Here one could come to a conclusion that consciousness might imply an awareness state rather than a capacity that builds up over time. However, there have been many other attempts to define consciousness also as a capacity (Fenigstein et al., 1975; Grant, 2002). Many types of consciousness have been studied in literature such as private vs. public self-consciousness (Fenigstein et al., 1975), self-reflection and insight (Grant et al., 2002), and integrative self-knowledge (Ghorbani, Watson, & Hargis, 2008). Especially concerning the definition of self-knowledge (Ghorbani, et al., 2008), we see an understanding of a form of knowing oneself as someone who has become wholly other (Hadot, 2002; as cited in Ghorbani et al., 2008) through

becoming a grander version of oneself. More recently, Tsao and Laszlo (2019) provided some evidence that consciousness is a phenomenon that actually exists outside of the brain rather than generated by it. They base this new paradigm shift on the recent research carried out in the area of quantum physics and related consciousness research.

Consciousness Between: The Interconnectedness Principle

No matter how consciousness might be defined, undoubtedly there is some capacity related to "what happens inside" vs. "what happens outside" as part of one's social expressions. We can look at consciousness as two-fold: consciousness "from within", vs "in between". When it comes to consciousness "in between", there is one term coined as "relational consciousness" by Hay and Nye in 1998. Originally observed in Nye's studies with children, relational consciousness entails an awareness capacity in a certain context as it relates to self, others, the world and the God. Here an interesting area of exploration forms between the self and the others that includes but is not limited to perceptions, perspectives, actions, understandings, and feelings. When we translate this area into a sort of "interpersonal space in between", dyadic relationships come to the fore, including those of the leader and the follower who may or may not develop a synchronic capacity in terms of relational consciousness. While this space they share together might be large or small, depending on their interaction and communication style, the *inaccessibility of that space* from either one or both parties could be approached under the term *a consciousness gap* (Aşkun, 2020).

Tsao and Laszlo (2019) propose many different approaches ranging from evolutionary and quantum biology, to epigenetics, neuroscience, economics, and finally to psychology and organizational behavior. As an example, the field of evolutionary biology shows that the interaction of between species which benefits all organisms involved leads to thriving ecosystems. This approach debunks the idea that only the fittest will survive as a result of competition. In a similar vein, quantum biology and related theories proposed that the interconnectedness and coherence which were observed in the quantum world could also exist in the macrolevel of living systems. Epigenetics, on the other hand, proposes a highly interactive mechanism between our genes and the environment, as a result of which chemical modifications could even be happening at our genes. And neuroscience has advanced to the point that we now are able to see the firing neurons in one person during acts of empathy…etc.

Coming to social sciences, the field of economics is shifting more toward creating prosperity and flourishing for all in opposition to old paradigm of individual focused, profit-maximizing approach where the benefit for the main shareholders would be the priority. It is no coincidence that in the year of 2019, almost 200 companies signed a petition declaring that shareholder value would no longer be their main focus ((https://www.cnbc.com/2019/08/19/the-ceos-of-nearly-two-hundred-companies-say-shareholder-value-is-no-longer-their-main-objective.html). Finally, in the field of psychology and organizational behavior, the emergence of positive psychology and organizational development which are rooted in the main idea that there is an innate human tendency to grow toward the positive. This entails many positive states, including but not limited to positive relationships, processes and therefore outcomes (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019).

The interconnectedness principle is widely researched. According to Davis et al. (2009), interconnectedness with the environment goes back to Buddhism, one of the most rooted Eastern traditions. According to Nhat Hahn (1999), boundaries between self and others, self and the environment could be blurred, or even be nonexistent (Davis et al., 2009).

The interconnectedness principle was explored in many studies, involving many different contexts, such as the nature (see Mayer & Frantz, 2004), and the human relationships (e.g., Aron & Aron, 1986 study on interconnectedness between partners in close interpersonal relationships). Interconnectedness as a principle and praxis has many different application areas including societal and business processes and outcomes. As an example, Dutra (2019) argued that interconnectedness could be applied to social systems with respect to cultural interconnectedness while innovation could be one of the social products. Dutra (2019) reveals some existing research that demonstrated that innovation can evolve in species exposed to new, changing environments while the partial connection between groups and increased population could lead to more innovative behavior in humans.

Finally, from a broader organizational perspective, Costa et al. (2022) have examined and conducted an extensive literature review on the interconnectedness of corporate sustainability constructs. As part of their

review, they talk about four responsibilities of corporations which are categorized under economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic (Carroll, 1991), and that they are interrelated while being conceptually independent. Similarly, Costa et al. (2022) argued that the stakeholder concept cannot be separated from corporate social responsibility (CSR). They relied on some other theories such as stakeholder theory by Freeman and colleagues who identified three interconnected problems: the problem of understanding how value is created and traded, the problem of connecting ethics and capitalism, to problem of helping management to address the two (Freeman, 1984). As a result of the related literature review and discussion, Costa et al. (2022) concluded that any definition of corporate social responsibility must include stakeholder management and that the balance between environmental issues, value creation, economic growth, social equity, and corporate sustainability. As a result of this balanced view, governance structures and processes should take shape possibly through undergoing transformation.

Having witnessed the presence of interconnectedness at different levels existence, from micro to macro, from biology to economics, and from individuals to businesses, it might be very useful and important to stress the crucial role that consciousness plays in its enactment no matter where it exists. Maheshwari (2021) has a useful term called Higher Consciousness Management (HCM) which is defined as a way of being and operating that enables managers and others to tap into the source of unbounded potential within themselves. According to HCM, there are three basic principles that are reflected as a paradigm, social/interpersonal and individual spheres. According to the paradigm principle, consciousness is a primary construct where the opposites exist in a complementary fashion while living in total harmony with nature. Social and interpersonal sphere is about interacting with compassion and harmony toward all life forms, and the individual sphere involves freedom of oneself from space time while developing openness and creativity.

The Consciousness Gap in an Interpersonal Space

When two individuals share a space, be it work-related or of a personal nature, each of them could be communicating and acting in ways that usually would reflect the type and level of consciousness (within and/or

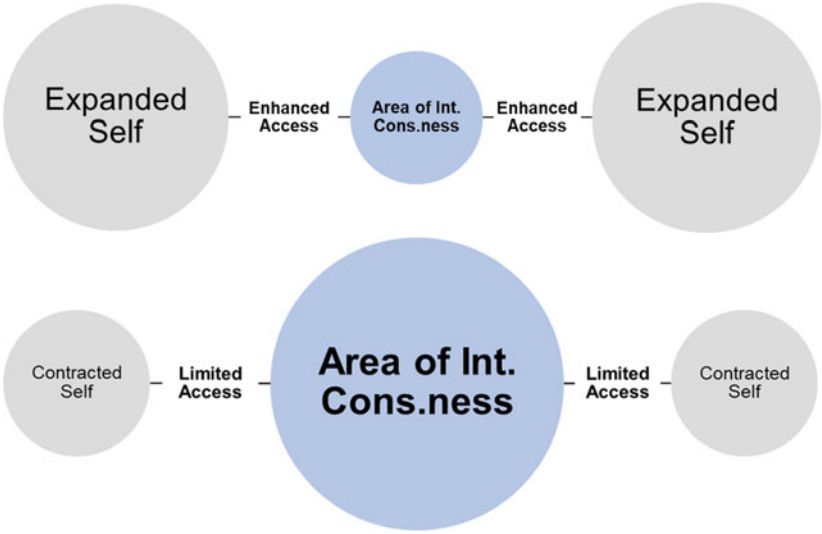
between, expanded vs. contracted) they each would have. Depending on their consciousness capacity and enactment of that capacity, the accessibility of the interpersonal space differs. In the case that one has more access to that space, the following might lay the foundation for that reach:

- Being conscious and aware of the impact of one's actions
- Willing to exert effort for further understanding of the other's state of being/feeling/acting

When there are problems in access to that interpersonal space, which we call the widening of the consciousness gap, some salient factors could be outlined as:

- A personal consciousness problem that prevents the person from being and feeling whole. Usually, a personal need state, a conflicting interest issue or any other sort of individual-based hurdle could be exemplified here.
- For some reason that we may not yet identify, a more self-oriented orientation related to a personal fear, anxiety or a desire that leads the individual to behave in ways that entails an egocentric approach to that interpersonal space. This usually is exemplified in behaviors and communication styles such as not listening, not spending the necessary effort to further understand the other, showing impatience with the other…etc.

When there is an enhanced accessibility in relation to the first scenario above, we might be talking more of an expanded sense of self (Ivanhoe, 2017); while for the latter, we might be witnessing more of a contracted sense of self (Aşkun, 2020). The gap widens when the self-contracts to fulfill his or her own needs states or shrinks when the individual has developed an enhanced capacity for relational consciousness. Here we can depict consciousness gap as the figure below (adapted from Aşkun, 2020):



Here in the former case, we see both the intrapersonal and interpersonal domain increase in terms of the area they occupy; whereas in the latter, we see both intra and interpersonal area contracting, leaving little room to co-create something new. With the help of the level of individual consciousness having an expansive and relational quality, the space in between could become either a "war zone" or a "oneness zone" (Aşkun, 2020, pp. 31). Sometimes in the business world, we might also call those a zero-sum game or a symbiosis (Dess et al., 2021).

Oneness in Leader Consciousness and Behaviors

Oneness hypothesis originally formulated by Ivanhoe et al. (2018) is a useful framework to understand the complex albeit interdepedent linkages between the parts and the wholes. Oneness hypothesis entails nature of the self and the relationship between the self and the other people, creatures, and things of the world based on an expanded sense of self (Ivanhoe, 2017) as we have outlined above in our discussion about the consciousness gap). Here it is imperative to note that the relationships between the entities are as important as the entities themselves. Finally, to help with understanding interconnectedness in the context of the oneness principle, Ivanhoe (2017, p. 2) wrote that: "the ideal of oneness

often gets expressed by metaphors of natural organic unity, for example, about how a healthy person is connected to the various parts of her own well-functioning body or how the good state is analogized to such a well-functioning body. This aspect of the oneness hypothesis explains why it carries the particular practical implications as it does: since the kinds of connections oneness concerns are integral to the health and well-being of both the individual and the larger wholes of which she is a part".

The oneness hypothesis is important not only because it helps us to create a picture of the world of interconnectedness, but also because it gives us an opportunity therefore a possibility to reconcile those two points of view between the independent self vs. the interdependent one. The independent self mostly promoted within the Western cultures (WEIRD) stresses individuality, autonomy, and mostly, the necessity of independence which also connotes independence as a prerequisite for the formation of a healthy sense of self (Kağtçıbaşı, 1996). On the other hand, the interdependent self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) reflects a more expansive self in terms of the self and the other relationships and the space that forms in between (non-WEIRD). Here the self is defined more in relational terms that encompasses one's family, society, and culture that leads to both the experience and enactment of the self in a contextual space. Here one attempt in trying to reconcile both views of self could be found in Kağtçıbaşı (1996)'s *the autonomous-relational self*. Here Kağtçıbaşı (1996) strongly argues against the mutually exclusive nature of self being independent vs interdependent, but rather, defends the independent and interdependent notions coexisting to form a mutually inclusive alternative. She claims both to be listed as inherent human needs which actually was also endorsed in the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1980) when they were outlining the basic human needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence.

As for the behaviors that reflect oneness, two factors emerged as a result of the explorative study by Aşkun and Çetin (2017): a person, be it a leader, a follower, an employee or a manager, either behaves by considering the other, or acts in ways that reflect only focusing on him or herself, including individual needs, interests, motivation…etc. The behavior that reflects oneness includes but is not limited to, how one communicates in ways that reflect empathy and understanding of the other, how one respects and considers the rights and therefore the position of the other, and how one understands the other from a relational vs. an egocentric

perspective. The way in which the behaviors form and are expressed lead to either the enlargement or to the downsizing of the consciousness gap.

The importance of the cultural dimension in understanding leader–followership relationship can best be illustrated by how the constructs of Leader-member exchange (LMX) and Leader Membership Guangxi (LMG) have been developed in organizational studies in recent years. LMX theory postulates that supervisors build up different relationships among the subordinates who report to them within the same work unit (Liden & Graen, 1980). These relationships evolve dynamically, bringing in the personal characteristics of the parties and the contextual factors such as the organizational culture, the size of the working group, and the organization's policies (Liden et al., 1993). The dynamic relationships are based on a trust-building process. The quality of the relationships can be described on a continuum ranging from high to low, reflecting the degree of trust, interaction, linkage, respect and support between the parties (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). LMG theory refers to the dyadic, particular and sentimental tie between a subordinate and his or her supervisor that potentially facilitates favorable exchanges between tied parties (Bian, 2006; Chen et al., 2009). Whereas working relationships play a more focal role in the LMX approach, LMG consider personal relationships between leaders and followers too (Chen et al., 2014). In many Asian countries, cultural value orientation is based on bonds arising from people coming from the same collective and not necessarily on the individualistic orientation found in Western cultures (Hofstede & Bond, 1984). People in the East Asian cultural context are tied together by guanxi, which literally means a network of relationships among various parties that cooperate together to support one another. LMG is particularly relevant to a collectivistic culture, where a familial process transforms the contract-based economic relationships into a communal sharing mode (Bond & Hwang, 1986; Fiske, 1991; Yang, 1992). Consistent with the epistemological assumptions of the individualistic cultures where LMX originated, the fair exchange of effort or performance for rewards between a supervisor and subordinate (equity-matching) on which LMX is based, LMG postulates that individuals undergo a similar equity matching process to determine whether the exchange relationship based on personal or friendship relationship is equitable. LMG builds on personal obligations which are sentiment and obligatory whereas LMX builds on work-related activities which

generate commitment and loyalty (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). In a collectivistic culture such as mainland China LMG may capture leader-member interactions more accurately than LMX.

Apart from understanding the theoretical underpinnings of why and how a consciousness gap forms, it might also be very useful to look at some necessary mechanisms or even tools that might be cultivated to enhance both the experience and practice of interconnectedness that not only would serve to close the consciousness gap between but also would promise a more positive future in terms of interpersonal space becoming more of a co-creative enterprise rather than a dictatorial one.

Part Three: MARCH Practices and Tools to Co-create Space of Oneness

In Part Three, we will briefly touch upon examples of practices that can help to turn oneness themes discussed in Parts One and Two into reality. A practice entails the development of practical knowledge of how to do something. Cooperative work on practice requires not only technical skills and competence, but also the cultivation of the appropriate mindset or dispositions such as enhanced consciousness within and between, commitment to a group, trustworthiness, honesty, pride in one's work, passion, and sensitivities, supported by appropriate rewards, internal or external. The five practices we have shortlisted in Part Three can be summarized into an acronym MARCH, which in this context stands for Mindfulness practices, Appreciative inquiry activities, Role-playing programs, Collaborative virtual reality projects, Harmony through wholeness praxis.

Practice 1 (Consciousness within): Mindfulness practices that can raise leadership consciousness. In recent years, companies from Wall Street to Silicon Valley have started to cultivate mindfulness in practices in the workplace. As a term, mindfulness is described as a present moment awareness with a nonjudgmental state of mind (Brown & Ryan, 2003). In terms of individual capacity, it represents self-regulation. In terms of attention, it represents an ability/capacity, in terms of directing one's attention to the present moment, it reflects a willingness (Brown et al., 2007). Overall, there is a cognitive element in mindfulness which endorses making sense of the environment in a mindful manner (Brown et al., 2007). In relation to oneness see also Aşkun and Çetin (2022).

In terms of the day-to-day practice of mindfulness, we can easily say that distractions come when the mind thinks too much about the future

or the past. It is argued that mindfulness practices helps to bring the leader back to the present moment. This is a good way to relieve the day-to-day stress faced by the leader in the office and allow the leader to focus more on the "consciousness of oneness from within" as the leader seeks to interact in a oneness way with his environment. There can be many ways to cultivate mindfulness at work. For example, taking more short breaks during office hours or taking a short walk during breaks can help the mind to rest and become revitalized. Mindfulness practices train the mind to stay calm and still amidst the distractions and stress that comes across the way of the leadership every day. One common way to cultivate mindfulness is meditation. According to Tsao and Laszlo (2019), mindful meditation helps with our ability to be fully present while discovering the innate perfection that exists at the moment. They further contend that the aim of mindful meditation is to cultivate meditative awareness itself, through applied practice which is basically training the mind so that it becomes aware of its presence, through keeping track of the body sensations, thoughts, and emotions during the process of meditation. By zeroing in on the present moment. it is not only an effective way to reduce stress in the workplace, but also it is an effective way to help the leader to refocus his or her attention on what are the issues which matter that need to deal with as a matter or priority. Being aware of the present moment will allow the leader to review his or her habits with awareness, thereby opening new possibilities for developing more innovative and creative approaches to solving problems.

A very good example of a mindful meditation is mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) developed by Jon-Kabat Zinn in 1979 (see Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). At a practical level, the practice also includes the body scan technique to increase our mindful awareness of our bodies, mindful walking, while attending to physical sensations during gentle movement of the body as well as loving-kindness meditation which is defined as a practice to help cultivate compassion for oneself and others (Salzberg, 1995).

Practice 2: Appreciative Inquiry AI activities (Consciousness between): To be able to close the consciousness gap between two individuals sharing a space, the appreciative inquiry could be used as a practicing and a remedial tool that makes the common space not only available to share for both parties but also provides an alternative practice of expression. The meaning of *Appreciative* includes an act of recognizing the best

in people and the world surrounding us with all of its positive potential. *The inquiry* includes the type of acts related to exploration through asking questions for seeking new possibilities (Krahnke & Cooperrider, 2008).

When we go into the root meaning of *Appreciative*, it means valuing, act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us, affirming strengths, and potentials. And *Inquiry* means the act of exploration and discovery, asking questions while being open to seeing new potentials and possibilities (Krahnke & Cooperrider, 2008). As a technique, AI relies on the power of strengths not on weaknesses (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). Under this framework, there are infinite ways in which reality could unfold. The reality for any type of individual, an organization, or a department can change anytime pertaining to how they perceive or approach a problem, a situation, or a solution. The time perspective is not linear since there is the understanding of the endless present moment with all its indefinite possibilities and realities. In this type of existence, thinking is as important as not-thinking and stillness. Similarly, individuality is as important as interdependence (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). In terms of practice, the dialogue with mutual respect and understanding takes over any sort of debate or discussion in which there is more of a zero-sum understanding of a relationship (Aşkun, 2020).

In terms of practice, Tsao and Laszlo (2019) provide a very useful set of activities that could form the basis of an AI exercise in organizations especially those going through a transformation process:

Here there are two individuals forming a dyad as A and B. A set of 3 questions are asked back and forth. The questions could be summarized as follows:

1. What was a high-point moment for you in leading positive change? Please reflect on the root causes of success. What are your special strengths?
2. When do people in your organization feel most engaged and passionate? What are your organization's strengths?
3. What do you see that is new, different, changed, or better in your organization 10 years from now?

Here one can easily detect the presence of nonjudgmental and open-ended nature of the questions that allow a lot of room for further

exploration, discovery, and co-creation since both parties have a good chance of expressing their views with no restriction but in a positive stance.

Practice 3: Role-playing programs (Consciousness Between): In recent years, we have also seen role-play being increasingly incorporated in business training programs as well as research practices. Role-playing business games, exercises and activities help build teams, train leadership confidence, develop employee motivation and improve communications. Role-playing practices can help to develop "consciousness between". The benefits of role-play include:

1. Building of confidence: Role-play involves the throwing of different situations at the leaders and their teams to test their reaction in a safe environment. Role-playing helps to build the confidence of the leader and team members.
2. Developing communication skills Effective role-play requires not only an understanding of words the other person use but also a good grasp of body language and non-verbal communication. Role-playing helps to foster the communication skills of leader and team members.
3. Creative problem-solving skills: when put in a role-play situation, the team will have to work out solutions to solve problems creatively. Role-playing will expose the leader and his team to handling difficult situations and in developing creative problem-solving skills.

The best role-play script is as realistic as possible. Physical locations that can replicate the actual scenarios in real life should be used as far as possible. The proceedings can be video-taped to allow the leader and the teammates to learn from their interaction and look for ways for improving performance. Consultants and actors can be hired where necessary to give more authenticity to the role-play exercise.

Practice 4: Collaborative VR/AR projects (consciousness within and between): With the vast amount of technological advancement that takes place today, the virtual reality and augmented reality-based change programs are coming to the fore. With the help of Virtual reality tools, we see evidence of better fear management, getting rid of phobias, and all sorts of anxieties. As a virtual tool that provides a real-world example without its necessary physical replica, VR technologies could be used by

organizations to help their stakeholders personal transformation process targeted either toward problem elimination or experiencing a new reality based on a new sense of self. AR technologies could provide a useful add-on to the existing reality of their users by helping the user gain increased access to an additional tool, a person, or any kind of resource with a better feel for its existence as close as it can be to a real-time interaction.

Practice 5: Harmony through wholeness praxis *(*Li & Lin, 2011*):* Finally, more as a practice framework rather than a solid practice, Li and Lin (2011) argued that for a healthy organizational transformation, we need to change the way we relate to our problems. In their "wholeness praxis paradigm", they suggest building horizontal network structures inside and outside of the organization. And then they suggest extending the vertical network from the real world to the envisioned ideal world by amplifying individual consciousness. In sum, the authors stress the importance of building a bridge for diverse groups and individuals where they co-create a new form of communicating with one another, between the real and the ideal worlds altogether.

Conclusion

The Chinese philosopher, Laozi made the following statement: "He who knows others is wise. He who knows himself is enlightened" (*zhi ren zhe zhi*, *zi zhi zhe ming*, 知人者智,自知者明, *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 33). This philosophical insight developed twenty-five centuries ago still has great relevance to our current understanding of consciousness and conscientiousness. It is the state of quality of awareness or being aware of an external object or something within itself. Conscientiousness is the propensity to follow socially prescribed norms for impulse control, to be goal-directed, to plan, and to be able to delay gratification (Roberts et al., 2009). Conscious parts resemble "oneness from within" "(He knows himself is enlightened" (*zi zhi zhe ming*自知者明") and conscientious wholes resemble "oneness from between" (He who knows others is wise" (*zhi ren zhe zhi*知人者智), We have in this paper attempted to demonstrate how oneness can be deployed as philosophical and psychological resource to close the gaps across boundaries at both the macro and micro levels of individuals and entities surrounding our worlds. Leadership cannot be thought of as the art and science of creating interconnectedness between conscious parts and conscientious wholes. We

have also suggested that as a learning organizational praxis, oneness can be deployed to cultivate organizational practices that can help to better manage interconnectedness among stakeholders in an organization. On an intrapersonal level, we can develop certain competencies that a leader must-have, including, but not limited to consciousness (such as awareness, self-knowledge, mindfulness), creativity, openness to experience and change (Aşkun, 2019), and a learning orientation. On an interpersonal level, we can develop empathy, respect, communication skills that involve active listening and appreciative inquiry capacity. Given the importance of these competencies for the betterment of the organizations and for the world, we have identified MARCH as five practices and tools that managers can use, and employees can benefit from. Our hope and intention is that these principles and practices would be embraced by learning organizations invested in co-creating stakeholder prosperity.

References

Aron, A., & Aron, E. N. (1986). *Love as the expansion of self: Understanding attraction and satisfaction*. Hemisphere.

Aşkun, D. (2019). Organizational oneness: A possible vision or an inescapable reality? In J. Marques (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to management and workplace spirituality* (pp. 154–167). Taylor & Francis

Aşkun, D. (2020). Leading as one: inclusive leadership through unity consciousness and the act of oneness. In J. Marques (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to management and workplace spirituality* (pp. 26–41). Taylor & Francis

Aşkun, D., & Çetin, F. (2017). How do we demonstrate oneness as a behavior? Operationalizing oneness through scale measurement. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health, 19*(1), 34–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/19349637.2016.1184998

Aşkun, D., & Çetin, F. (2022). Understanding possible personal correlates of organizational citizenship behavior: Mindfulness and oneness behaviors. *Journal of General Management,* 03063070221104587.

Bian, Y. (2006). Guanxi. In J. Beckert & M. Zafirovski (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of economic sociology* (pp. 312–314). Routledge.

Bolinger, A. R., & Stanton, J. V. (2020). *Role-play simulations*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bond, M. H., & Hwang, K. (1986). *The social psychology of Chinese people*. Oxford University Press.

Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(4), 822.

Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M., & Creswell, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological Inquiry, 18*(4), 211–237.

Cameron, K. (2011). Responsible leadership as virtuous leadership. In *Responsible leadership* (pp. 25–35). Springer.

Carroll, A. B. (1991). The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business Horizons, 34*(4), 39–48. https://www.cnbc.com/2019/08/19/the-ceos-of-nearly-two-hundred-companies-say-shareholder-value-is-no-longer-their-main-objective.html

Chen, Y., Friedman, R., Yu, E., Fang, W., & Lu, X. (2009). Supervisor-subordinate guanxi: Developing a three-dimensional model and scale. *Management and Organization Review, 5*, 375–399.

Chen, Y., Yu, E., & Son, J. (2014). Beyond leader-member exchange (LMX) differentiation: An indigenous approach to leader-member relationship differentiation. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 611–627.

Costa, A. J., Curi, D., Bandeira, A. M., Ferreira, A., Tomé, B., Joaquim, C., Santos, C., Gois, C., Meira, D., Azevedo, G., Inácio, H., Jesus, M., Teixeira, M. G., Teixeira, P., Duarte, R., & Marques, R. P. (2022). Literature review and theoretical framework of the evolution and interconnectedness of corporate sustainability constructs. *Sustainability, 14*(8), 4413.

Davis, J. L., Green, J. D., & Reed, A. (2009). Interdependence with the environment: Commitment, interconnectedness, and environmental behavior. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 29*(2), 173–180.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1980). Self-determination theory: When mind mediates behavior. *Journal of Mind and Behavior, 1*(1), 33–43.

Dess, G., McNamara, G., Eisner, A., & Lee, S-H. (2021). *Strategic management: Text and cases.* McGraw Hill

Dienesch, R. M., & Liden, R. C. (1986). Leader-member exchange model of leadership: A critique and further development. *Academy of Management Review, 11*, 618–634.

Dutra, N. B. (2019). Cultural interconnectedness and in-group cooperation as sources of innovation. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 42*, E198.

Fenigstein, A., Scheier, M. F., & Buss, A. H. (1975). Public and private self-consciousness: Assessment and theory. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *43*(4), 522– 527. hapman, J. W., and William A. G. 1992. "*Virtue (Nomos 34)*".

Fiske, A. P. (1991). *Structures of social life: The four elementary forms of human relations*. Free Press.

Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*Pitman.

George, J. M. (1991). State or trait: Effects of positive mood on prosocial behaviors at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*(2), 299.

Ghorbani, N., Watson, P. J., & Hargis, M. B. (2008). Integrative self-knowledge scale: Correlations and incremental validity of a cross-cultural measure developed in Iran and the United States. *The Journal of Psychology, 142*(4), 395–412.

Grant, A. M., Franklin, J., & Langford, P. (2002). The self-reflection and insight scale: A new measure of private self-consciousness. *Social Behavior and Personality, 30*(8), 821–836.

Hadot, P. (2002). *What is ancient philosophy?* Cambridge University Press.

Haidt, J. (2006). *The happiness hypothesis: Finding modern truth in ancient wisdom*. Basic books.

Handelsman, M. M., Knapp, S., & Gottlieb, M. C. (2009). Positive ethics: themes and variations. *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 105–113).

Hay, D., & Nye, R. (1998). *The spirit of the child*. HarperCollins.

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature, 466*(7302), 29–29.

Hofstede, G., & Bond, M. H. (1984). Hofstede's culture dimensions an independent validation using rokeach's value survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 15*, 417–433.

Isenberg, D. J. (2008, December). The global entrepreneur. *Harvard Business Review*.

Ivanhoe, P. J. (2017). *Oneness: East Asian conceptions of virtue, happiness, and how we are all connected*. Oxford University Press.

Ivanhoe, P. J., Flanagan, O. J., Harrison, V. S., Sarkissian, H., & Schwitzgebel, E. (2018). *The oneness hypothesis. Beyond the boundary of self*. Columbia University Press.

Kağtçıbaşı, Ç. (1996). The autonomous-relational self: A new synthesis. *European Psychologist, 1*(3), 180–186. https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040.1.3.180

Krahnke, K. , & Cooperrider, D. (2008). Appreciative inquiry: Inquiring new questions and dreaming new dreams. In L. Tischler & G. Biberman (Eds.), *Spirituality in business: Theory, practice, and future directions*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Labovitz, G., & Rosansky, V. (1997). *The power of alignment: How great companies stay centered and accomplish extraordinary things*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Li, M., & Lin, K. (2011). A new paradigm of organizational transformation: Enacting wholeness praxis in the oneness of problem and possibility. *Systems Practice and Action Research, 24*, 107–132. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-010-9179-z

Liden, R. C., & Graen, G. B. (1980). Generalizability of the vertical dyad linkage model of leadership. *Academy of Management Journal, 23*, 451–465.

Liden, R. C., & Maslyn, J. M. (1998). Multidimensionafity of leader-member exchange: An empirical assessment through scale development. *Journal of Management, 24*, 43–72.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., & Stilwell, D. (1993). A longitudinal study on the early development of leader-member exchanges. *Journal of applied psychology, 78*(4), 662.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., & Sparrowe, R. T. (2000). An examination of the mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relations between the job, interpersonal relationships, and work outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 407–416.

Lobel, D. (2018). *Philosophies of happiness*. Columbia University Press.

Macintyre, A. (1984). *After virtue*. University of Notre Dame Press.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Introduction to consciousness-based leadership and management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K., & Gupta, R. K. (2018). Vedic Leadership: Theory and Practice of Operating from Natural Law. The Palgrave Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, 491–511.

Mainardes, E. W., Alves, H., & Raposo, M. (2012). A model for stakeholder classification and stakeholder relationships. *Management decision*.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*(2), 224–253. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.98.2.224

Mayer, F. S., & Frantz, C. M. (2004). The connectedness with nature scale: A measure of individuals' feeling in community with nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 24*, 503–515.

McNeely, B. L., & Meglino, B. M. (1994). The role of dispositional and situational antecedents in prosocial organizational behavior: An examination of the intended beneficiaries of prosocial behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 79*(6), 836.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness*. Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial. Argentina

Nhat Hahn, T. (1999). *Interbeing: Fourteen guidelines for engaged Buddhism*. Parallax Press.

Piliavin, J. A., & Charng, H. W. (1990). Altruism: A review of recent theory and research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *16*(1), 27–65.

Roberts, B. W., Jackson, J. J., Fayard, J. V., Edmonds, G., & Meints, J. (2009). Conscientiousness. In M. R. Leary & R. H. Hoyle (Eds.), *Handbook of individual differences in social behavior* (pp. 369–381). The Guilford Press.

Salzberg, S. (1995). *Loving-kindness: The revolutionary art of happiness*. Shambhala Publications.

Shklar, J. N. (1992). Justice without virtue. *Chapman and Galston (1992)*, 283.

Shweder, R. A. (1991). *Thinking through cultures: Expeditions in cultural psychology*. Harvard University Press.

Tsao, F. C., & Laszlo, C. (2019). *Quantum leadership: New consciousness in business*. Stanford University Press

Visser, W. (2011). *The age of responsibility: CSR 2.0 and the new DNA of business*. John Wiley & Sons.

Weiner, N. O. (1993). *The harmony of the soul: Mental health and moral virtue reconsidered*. SUNY Press.

Yang, K. (1992). Chinese social orientation: From the social interaction perspective. In K. S. Yang & A. B. Yu (Eds.), *Chinese psychology and behavior*, (pp. 87–142). Taipei, Taiwan: Laureate.

PART II

Relational Approaches to Organizational Oneness and Well-Being

CHAPTER 9

Horizons of Consciousness: For Emerging Opportunities Management

Anil K. Maheshwari

Introduction

Organizational performance is challenged by volatile uncertain business environments and the simultaneous need for the business to be profitable and be a good citizen in the world (Nandram & Bindlish, 2017). Organizations need to look far and near, and move fast and slow, simultaneously to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving world. These seemingly conflicting goals require a wider awareness within which these are embraced as complementary. In the not-too-distant past, IBM corporation brought in a new CEO from the outside, who had a completely different view of how business should be run. This CEO made drastic changes in personnel, products, and processes to save the company (Gertsner, 2003). IBM utilized a horizons-of-consciousness framework to effectively structure the process of managing for stability and growth simultaneously (O'Reilley et al., 2009). IBM invented disruptive business strategies,

A. K. Maheshwari (✉)
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_9

management processes, and recruited new skills required for effectively exploring nascent technologies that could be very disruptive and transformative in the marketplace at a future point in time (Rogers, 1995; Christensen, 2006). The author was employed in the emerging business opportunities (EBO) unit of IBM for many years and had a first-hand view of the plans and successes of that initiative. This chapter describes the horizons of consciousness model and how it was applied at IBM, for effective and balanced management of a spectrum of technologies and emergent opportunities. This successful approach has implications for the current times, where the development of disruptive technologies has accelerated further.

Entrepreneurial Imperative for Emerging Technologies

The future is happening much sooner than one thinks, according to Diamandis and Kotler (2020). The confluence of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Multiverse, Genetics, and more have the potential to completely disrupt entire industries. Most organizations fail to achieve a vibrant balance between existing and new businesses and often lose vitality (Christensen, 2013; Kahneman, 2011; Thaler, 2012). Organizations need fluid and nimble thinking, and ambidextrous behaviors, to lead and disrupt their industries and gain competitive advantage (Gulati & Maheshwari, 2023, this volume; Gurubatham, this volume; O'Reilley & Tushman, 2021). A first-mover advantage in an emerging technology market has the potential to transform an organization and the markets. Apple Inc, under its founder and CEO Steve Jobs, successfully created a new music ecosystem consisting of iPod music players and the iTunes music delivery system, and completely disrupted the power structure in the music industry (Isaacson, 2011). Apple and many other leading companies realized that it would prefer to have its existing products cannibalized by its own new products, rather than by the competitors' products (Yu & Malnight, 2016). This philosophy may have helped Apple to become the most highly valued company on the planet currently.

A willingness to try out new ideas is at the heart of entrepreneurship (Bhave, 1994; Landes et al., 2012). Peter Drucker (1995) defines the entrepreneur as one who shifts economic resources from an area of

lower benefits into an area of higher benefits. However, spiritual and social entrepreneurs too can make a significant difference in the world (Maheshwari & Pandey, 2022; Pandey & Maheshwari, 2023). Research shows that there are two competing theories of how entrepreneurs find opportunities: the discovery model and the creation model (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Bhave (1994) calls the two methods as externally or internally stimulated opportunity recognition. In the discovery model, entrepreneurs discover an opportunity in the marketplace, and quickly exploit it. For example, the imposition of the legal prohibition on alcohol in the United States created new opportunities for thousands of bottlers to emerge and create a "soft drink" industry (Hiatt et al., 2009). In the creation model, the opportunity identification happens when the fineness of perception of the entrepreneurs helps in "objectifying subtle cues," and thus helps them sense an opportunity (Nandram et al., 2018). In this model, the opportunity emerges in the consciousness of the entrepreneur (Weick, 1979). Maharishi (1995) called it the ability to see the dawn before the first ray of the sun shines through. As Steve Jobs of Apple famously said, "The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."

Both the discovery and creation models have implications for the nature of entrepreneurial process. Edelman and Yli-Renko (2010), in comparative and longitudinal research to bridge the two theories of entrepreneurship, found that the entrepreneur's perceptions mediate the objective characteristics of the environment and the entrepreneur's efforts to create a new venture. Ardichvili et al. (2003) propose that "entrepreneurial alertness" is a necessary condition for the success of the opportunity identification process. Zahra (2008) goes further and reported that the two theories support each other and that there is a virtuous cycle of discovery and creation of entrepreneurial opportunities. In a study of 30 entrepreneurs, Sarasvathy (2001) found that entrepreneurs engage in "effectual thinking" or *bricolage*. It starts with inventorying all the means and knowledge available at hand, and then creatively finding ways to make ventures happen. In an experimental study of 40 entrepreneurs, Yogalakshmi and Latha (2015) reported that regular practice of technologies of consciousness such as *yoga asanas* and *pranayaams* led to statistically significant improvement of creativity and fluid thinking. Surveying 280 entrepreneurs, and utilizing the respondents' own definition of success, Kauanui et al. (2008, 2010) found

two different groups of entrepreneurs: one that defined success in relation to business as usual and financial goals—and another that defined success in relation to their own internal needs of creative expression and fulfillment.

The failure to adapt to changing market conditions and technological developments ultimately can lead to the downfall of once-dominant companies (Schumpeter, 2013). Here are some examples:

- Eastman Kodak Co was late to embrace the powerful wave of digital photography that they invented and were fully aware of (Larish 2012). Organizational inertia won the day because digital photography was injurious to the film camera whose business model was based on its high-margin film-based recurring revenue stream model.
- Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) was a leader in mid-range computers and invented the then most powerful 64-bit Alpha integrated CPU chip. However, DEC failed to see and engage with the personal computer (PC) revolution and was eventually acquired by Compaq, the leading PC-making company.
- Video telephony was invented at AT&T Bell Laboratories. However, they missed the IP-based video communication revolution as it was injurious to the per-minute calling charge model of the circuit-switched network. Skype emerged as a new IP-based communication service and dominated the world.
- IBM has a mixed record in capitalizing on its inventions. It failed to capitalize fully on many of the technologies it invented, including photocopying (that Xerox dominated) and software (that Microsoft dominated). It also failed to dominate the PC market and had to exit the market.

Technology Management Process

In order to survive and thrive, organizations must be willing and able to adapt to changing circumstances and evolving customer needs and be willing to take calculated risks in order to stay ahead of the curve. The development and management of new knowledge and technologies is an inherently uncertain and alchemic process (Gehani, 1998; Shane, 2009; von Hippel, 2006). Knowledge is structured in consciousness,

and breakthrough ideas can arise from the most mysterious of people, places, situations, and times (Maharishi, 1995). For example, the patent clerk Albert Einstein wrote four amazing papers in the year 1905 which revolutionized the fields of physics, and made him the poster child for genius. Attentive entrepreneurs tend to grab new capabilities and build new businesses through an unexpected use of these technologies. For example, a scientist in the R&D labs at Dow Corning had invented a special glass that had no immediate use for the company's business. However, Apple Inc used that glass as the basis for the revolutionary touch screens in its iPhones (Isaacson, 2011). Not all such new technologies attempts succeed as they fail to "cross the chasm" between the enthusiastic initial customers, and the price-conscious practical customers (Moore & McKenna, 2006).

The technology management lifecycle has been characterized as having three essential stages (Fig. 9.1) (Lee, 2010; Roberts, 2007; Tripsas, 2000):

Technology Generation: New technologies and ideas may arise from the demand side or the supply side (von Hippel, 1986). An organization's internal research capabilities can produce technological developments. The organization's customer-facing employees can identify customer pain points that need a solution. New technologies and capabilities can then be matched to needs and tested to meet that needs.

Solutions Deployment: New technologies may be used to solve many different problems in the marketplace and thus create opportunities (Diamandis & Kotler, 2012; Drucker, 1995). For example, Artificial intelligence technologies are providing benefits across almost all industries. Developing and deploying solutions around a technology may require complementary assets in terms of domain knowledge and client access, etc. (Gehani, 1998; Von Hippel, 2006), for which an organization may need to partner with customers and suppliers. With customer feedback, prototype solutions can be iteratively refined till the customers' needs are

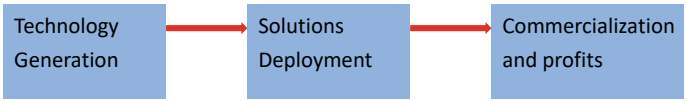


Fig. 9.1 Technology management stages

met, satisfactorily (Gehani, 1998). Solutions need to continue to evolve, or else they can be disrupted by competition (Schumpeter, 2013).

Commercialization and profits: This final step is to scale up the dissemination of the solutions in the market. One needs to understand the sweet spot of the market, translate the solutions into competitive advantage and market leadership, and generate revenue and profits for the organization. Products need to have some element of "stickiness" built in, as the users have a "choice space" within which they can choose one or the other provider of similar services (Keen & Williams, 2013). The organization would also attempt to build a "moat" around the product so competition cannot easily step in. Commercializing phase requires applying the full force of the organization's current capabilities, to launch solutions with a speedy, cost-effective, and flawless execution.

Horizons of Consciousness

The organization's attention needs to be focused on the regular activities of production and sales, as well as the future planning for a decade or more ahead (Kahneman, 2011). A Horizons of consciousness framework can create novelty- and time-based categories to balance the attention between new potential technologies and current business concerns. The key principles across the horizons are that (a) emerging technologies and capabilities should be sensed, and (b) emerging technologies need to be evaluated, selected, and developed differently at different stages in its own cycle of evolution, and (c) the mature technologies and solutions should be exploited for large benefits. A technology or opportunity should be managed according to its Horizon category, so as to increase its chances of reaching its full potential (Fig. 9.2).

Horizon 1 is the near-term time zone. This can be mapped to the Commercialization and Profits phase of the Technology Management Lifecycle. There is high predictability to the operations based on the accumulated data from the past. The technology, solutions, and customer sets are well-developed and well-defined. These solutions may be strongly identified with the organization, by customers and other stakeholders. These are mature technologies with strong competitive pressures, large revenues, and lower profit margins. The organization's objective is to exploit them rapidly through pricing and distribution power to make strong profits.

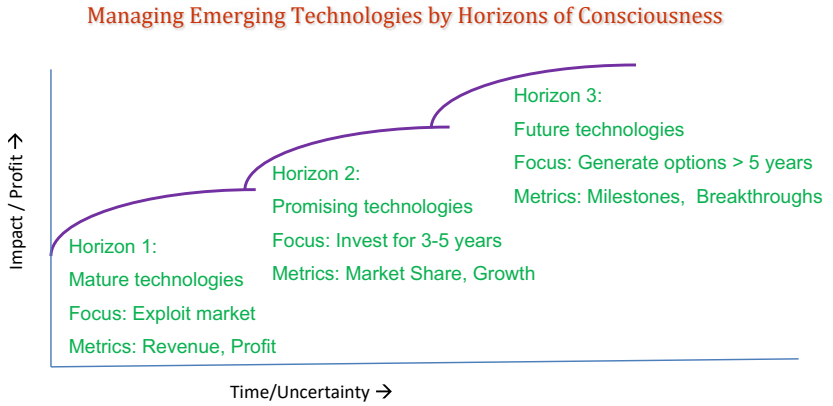


Fig. 9.2 Horizons of consciousness

Horizon 2 is the medium-term time frame and prototype stage. Horizon 2 can be mapped to the Solutions Deployment phase of the Technology Management Lifecycle. In this stage, promising emerging technologies are incubated and nurtured for future deployment in the marketplace. The organizational goal would be to build potential revenue streams for the future. These technologies need to be explored and mapped to potential client needs (pain points) to develop innovative solutions. Innovative solutions may be co-created and iteratively refined with feedback from the clients. Organizations may also collaborate with others to build a coalition for a new desired future based on those possibilities, such as through open-sourcing the patents. Periodically, the solution sets would be formally evaluated through a feasibility gating process for assessing their commercial feasibility (Gehani, 1998). Gating decisions are made to either continue to invest in the technology and nurture the opportunity, or to divest it and free up resources and energies for other promising technologies. At the end of the designated nurturing period, the Horizon 2 technologies and solutions should be carefully transitioned into Horizon 1, where they can be commercially deployed.

Horizon 3 is the long-term or about 5–10 years out. Horizon 3 activities can be mapped to the Technology Generation phase of the Technology Management Lifecycle. Horizon 3 contains the unmanifest

seeds of future opportunities. Researchers and inventors may be intrinsically inspired to find solutions for hitherto insoluble and acute problems. The premise is that a great problem can be a great opportunity. Organizations scan for such green shoots of new ideas and technologies. For example, an organization may conduct a brainstorming event to tap into the consciousness of all its employees and generate ideas. Championing the ideas with entrepreneurial persistence can be a virtue at this stage. Rapid experimentation and adaptive volution is the primary modus operandi. The risks of investments can be distributed over a wide range of potential ideas, and encourage the best ideas with an infusion of talent and funds along the way (Cabrales et al., 2008).

The metrics and managerial skills required for managing technologies on each horizon are shown in Fig. 9.2. For Horizon 1 businesses, the management practices and primary metrics include revenue, profit and return-on-Investment. For Horizon 2 technologies and solutions, the metrics are balanced between exploration and exploitation. Metrics include client acquisition, growth rate, and market share. For Horizon 3, creative ideas and passion and persistence for those ideas may be the most important trait. The metrics include design breakthroughs and proofs-of-concept. Leaders for Horizons 2 and 3 should be flexible, visionary intrapreneurs who are dynamic and nimble enough to work in an evolving environment and mature enough to accept challenges, and willing to be proven wrong.

Organizational Distance Between Horizons

The organizational leadership needs to develop complementary capabilities of exploitation of Horizon 1 businesses, and exploration of Horizon 2 and 3 possibilities (Gulati & Maheshwari, this volume). Many attempts within large companies to collaborate on technology development and commercialization are foiled by power plays, turf problems, and continual corporate reorganization. For Horizon 2 initiatives to succeed, an organization needs to create a measure of organizational separation (Day & Shoemaker, 2000) for protecting them from business-as-usual oriented pressures from Horizon 1 businesses. The organization could create a separate entity for managing emerging opportunities, inside or outside the formal confines of the company i.e., it could be spun out as a startup or could be a cordoned-off entity inside the company. Organizations can

signal importance of Horizon 2 businesses by allocating some of their most creative innovative leaders to these units. The Horizon 2 business unit should be autonomous and have more flexible processes. It should also be freed to recruit precious scarce relevant professional talent from outside the organization as needed. Its dedicated staff should be effectively shielded from the urgent needs and managerial styles of the mature parent businesses, or supervision from a near-term results perspective. The parent organization should provide an incubator environment to nurture the growth of the H2 unit.

Horizons of Consciousness at IBM Emerging Business Opportunities (EBO) Unit

IBM is a leading global information technology company that has been an innovator and global leader in the IT industry through most of its 100 + year existence. Its portfolio of products and services evolved from weighing scales and tabulating machines, to mainframe and personal computers, to software and consulting services, to predictive analytic services, to quantum computing. In the 1990s, for a variety of mostly internal reasons, a new CEO was brought in from the outside to save the company. The IBM turnaround story has been documented in detail elsewhere (Applegate & Collins, 2009; Gerstner, 2003). In brief, with the emergence of the internet, IBM developed the concept of e-business, which became very popular in the industry. IBM also made strategic acquisitions and shed non-strategic units. A few years later IBM was still losing its technological edge and market share to more nimble competitors in the dot-com industry of the late 1990s. This forced IBM to think of a radically different way of selecting and managing the right technologies for longer-term success. IBM utilized the Horizons of consciousness to successfully categorize technologies and business opportunities, based on their risk and reward profile, and then to apply differentiated management processes to nurture and deploy them. IBM successfully implemented the principle of organizational separation to protect nascent technologies from business-as-usual processes and metrics. In the year 2000, the company decided to form a separate Emerging Business Opportunities (EBO) unit to focus serious attention on emerging technologies and geographies. This unit was created as part of the parent IBM organization. The success of IBM EBO unit has also been formally documented in other places (Garvin & Levesque, 2004; O'Reilly et al., 2009). This

chapter builds upon them and is deeply informed by a first-hand experience of the author as an active participant in this unit through the many years of the unit's existence.

Even as the two principles of Horizons of Consciousness and Organizational Separation are simple and obvious; their practical implementation in a large running corporation is not quite so. IBM assigned a highly respected executive to head the EBO unit. This effectively signaled to the entire IBM organization the seriousness of intent behind the new EBO strategy. This brought about a total shift in the consciousness of the company and there was an increased respect for this initiative within IBM. Many successful employees from other units sought assignments in this unit.

About a dozen technologies of the Horizon 2 range (3–5 years maturity) were selected for incubation in the EBO unit. Funding for the emerging technologies was allocated for a fixed 3-year period. The EBO unit was empowered to create its own metrics, which could be different from that of the rest of IBM. The EBO unit gradually developed new processes to streamline the management of the various emerging technologies under its charter. Here are a few of those processes necessary for the success of the unit.

Technology Selection

Technology candidates for EBO were carefully selected from a wide range of options generated from internal and external sources. Data was gathered and collated by internal market intelligence teams. Key parameters of interest were the opportunity size, growth rate, maturity curve, complementary assets/capabilities needed, investment requirements, industry dynamics, and IBM's ability to execute in that technology opportunity to capture market share. Technology candidates were plotted as bubble diagrams as circles on a two-dimensional grid to map the strategic attractiveness of the market, our ability to capture market share, the size of the potential revenue, and growth rates. The most desirable technologies were those with high market attractiveness, high ability to execute, high opportunity size, and high growth rates. Other criteria such as the strategic nature of the technology, customers' requests, and competitive necessity, were also applied to the evaluation process.

Business Procedures

Dedicated cross-functional teams were created for nurturing each emerging technology and developing its potential. The teams were afforded the flexibility to make agile decisions on technology acquisition, alliances, hiring, purchasing, and customer engagements. Each team had a carefully chosen successful leader from within IBM to guide it to rapid development. Each team also had its own technology evangelists. Every team was built by drawing upon members from many parts of the IBM organization, including R&D, labs, engineering, pre-sales, marketing, and the sales force. Mid-career professional people with hot new skills, e.g., from imploding dot-com startups, were recruited to strengthen the skill base. These teams were provided firm budgets for 3 years. Metrics for the teams were designed to be broad-based, to include softer metrics like solution stacks and customer acquisitions, in addition to revenue targets.

Technology demonstration centers were designed to showcase the potential use cases and benefits of each of these technologies, e.g., mobile lifestyle. First-of-a-kind (FOAK) assignments were implemented to co-create solutions with customers in IBM labs. Strategic alliances were formed with large and small partner organizations with complementary assets, to strengthen the ability to execute quickly on opportunities. Team members participated in industry consortia to influence technology standards. IBM organization and business partners were continuously educated on the progress of the EBO unit through newsletters, e-zines, and events. IBM Sales organization was trained in selling emerging solutions.

Governance

Every half year, every technology team presented their progress in a rigorous and comprehensive high-level review by an EBO board. A decision was made on whether to continue investing in that opportunity or technology. Unless there were some extreme circumstances about a technology's performance, the funding was continued. At the end of the 3-year nurturing period, a plan was developed to find a suitable Horizon 1 home for the team and its attendant technology and solutions, within the mainstream IBM organization. The Horizon 2 solutions were transitioned to Horizon 1 solutions to enrich the portfolio of solutions offered to IBM's customers.

Lessons from IBM Case Study

Building and nurturing a dynamic and vital portfolio of emerging opportunities lies at the heart of sustainable growth for the organization (Roberts, 2007). An organization can signal its seriousness and engagement with emerging opportunities by assigning some of its best and most dynamic business talents to those units. To build a strong portfolio, every potential technology should be evaluated on many dimensions such as the maturity of technology, revenue potential, compatibility with the organization's strengths, and more, using an application-oriented methodology of tear-down analysis and strategic evaluation (Lee, 2010).

Internal data can be supplemented with data from external consulting companies that can provide reliable data to help business organizations evaluate their investments in various technologies. Creating strategic alliances with other organizations can be another way to pool resources and create new entities around emerging opportunities. The new entity could be an independent legal entity sponsored by multiple organizations to ensure the long-term stability required to realize fully the potential benefits sought from the technologies. Finally, organization separation can also be achieved by spinning off new businesses (Diamandis & Kotler, 2020).

Ethics of Emerging Technologies

Powerful emerging technologies can raise new issues such as that of data privacy and cyber security. This requires considering the ethical, social, and environmental implications of new technologies, as well as engaging stakeholders such as policymakers, industry leaders, and the public in the decision-making process. In recent years there has been increasing emphasis on responsible innovation, through and new initiatives and frameworks developed to guide the responsible management of emerging technologies. There are two primary principles. The "Precautionary Principle" (Clarke, 2005), states that if an action or policy has the potential to cause harm to the public or to the environment, in the absence of scientific consensus, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action. "Responsible Innovation" (Stilgoe et al., 2020) initiative is a framework that aims to integrate ethical, social, and environmental considerations into the research and development process for new technologies.

Guidelines for Managing Emerging Opportunities

This chapter discussed several key strategies that organizations can use to effectively manage nascent technologies:

1. Mission: Demonstrate that the organization cares for emerging technologies and opportunities as a vital part of the organization. There are two types of missions. One type of mission is an achievable task with a fixed goal that is often tactical and short-term in nature. The other mission is a high-level aspiration that provides direction and motivation to an organization over a long period. Managing emerging opportunities can be a mission that provides direction for a long time.
2. Objectives: Identify specific business problems or opportunities that the selected technologies are intended to address, with clear goals and objectives. There needs to be a framework of challenging but achievable targets to guide the opportunities in the early stages of development. Continuously but tenderly monitor the development of the technology and make adjustments to the roadmap as needed.
3. Process: Encourage a culture of innovation within the organization, and provide organizational separation for employees working on Horizon 2 opportunities. Involve customers, suppliers, regulators, and others in the development and deployment of solutions to meet customer needs and environmental expectations. Develop a governance structure to manage the technology, roles and responsibilities, decision-making, and communication protocols across stakeholders. Assess the potential risks and uncertainties associated with the technologies and opportunities, including technical, regulatory, market, and ethical risks.
4. Products & Solutions: Create a roadmap for the development and deployment of the solutions from the Horizon 2 technologies, including key performance indicators. Develop partnerships with external organizations, such as universities, research institutions, customers, suppliers, governments, and others, to gain access to ideas, technologies, expertise, and resources.
5. Consciousness: Expand the self-awareness of the leadership teams across the organization to become aware of the importance of rapid adaptation and innovation. Develop a fineness of perception to identify subtle cues before they become missed opportunities.

Development of Consciousness Imperative

How can organizations enhance the ambidextrous capability of generating creative options and managing the tensions between old and new businesses (Christensen, 2013)? Leadership should create an environment that allows organizations and managers to perform at the highest level of their own potential (Maheshwari, 2021). We suggest that employees can conceive of new possibilities by transcending the current surface reality of current products and customers. The employees should be able to connect with their inner source and receive the flow of ideas from within (Maheshwari, 2023). We posit, with some empirical support, that leadership transcending together will experience an invisible flow of oneness through *common-sensing* (Nandram, 2015) of new and simple solutions to old problems.

V-theory of Transcendence presents a simple model of going beyond the surface level reality and connecting with the unbounded pure consciousness (Maheshwari, 2021) and developing fluid thinking (Gurubatham, 2023, this volume). This collective consciousness of the organization would evolve based on (a) a self-reflective culture that would be self-critical and nurturing at the same time and (b) shared practices of connectedness. Ambidextrous organizations with leadership anchored in coherent states of consciousness are more likely to be self-evolving, resilient, and value generators to all its stakeholders (Gulati & Maheshwari, this volume). The organization's vision needs to have a broad mandate to include infinite possibilities, like a big dance hall with a oneness of orchestra. Organizations would dance around a spine of oneness to grow, allowing a wide variety of moves to grow while aligned with a central inspiring mission. Development of consciousness is essential to create the ground for adaptive and effective leadership for sustainability of the organization as well as the environment (Maheshwari, 2021, 2023).

References

Alvarez, S. A., & Barney, J. B. (2007). Discovery and creation: Alternative theories of entrepreneurial action. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, 1*(1–2), 11–26.

Applegate, L., & Collins, E. (2009). IBM's dcade of transformation: Turnaround to growth. *Harvard Business School Case*. 9-805-130.

Ardichvili, A., Cardozo, R., & Ray, S. (2003). A theory of entrepreneurial opportunity identification and development. *Journal of Business Venturing, 18*(1), 105–123.

Baghai, M., Coley, S., White, D., & Coley, S. (2000). *The alchemy of growth: Practical insights for building the enduring enterprise*. Basic Books.

Bhave, M. P. (1994). A process model of entrepreneurial venture creation. *Journal of Business Venturing, 9*(3), 223–242.

Cabrales, Á. L., Medina, C. C., Lavado, A. C., & Cabrera, R. V. (2008). Managing functional diversity, risk taking and incentives for teams to achieve radical innovations. *R&D Management., 38*(1), 35–50.

Christensen, C. M. (2013). *The innovator's dilemma: when new technologies cause great firms to fail*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Clarke, S. (2005). Future technologies, dystopic futures and the precautionary principle. *Ethics and Information Technology, 7*(3), 121–126.

Day, G., & Shoemaker, P. (2000). *Wharton on managing emerging technologies*. Wiley.

Diamandis, P. H., & Kotler, S. (2012). *Abundance: The future is better than you think*. Simon and Schuster.

Diamandis, P. H., & Kotler, S. (2020). *The future is faster than you think: How converging technologies are transforming business, industries, and our lives*. Simon & Schuster.

Drucker, P. (1995). *Innovation and entrepreneurship*. HarperBusiness.

Edelman, L., & Yli-Renko, H. (2010). The impact of environment and entrepreneurial perceptions on venture-creation efforts: Bridging the discovery and creation views of entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 34*(5), 833–856.

Garvin, D, A., & Levesque, L. C. (2004). Emerging business opportunities at IBM (A). *Harvard Business School case*. 9-304-075.

Gehani, R. R. (1998). *Management of technology and operations*. John Wiley & Sons.

Gerstner, L. V. (2003). *Who says elephants can't dance?: Leading a great enterprise through dramatic change*. HarperBusiness.

Gulati, V, & Maheshwari, A. K. (2023, this volume). Consciousness and ambidexterity: impact of meditation on oneness and ambidexterous behavior. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management, volume 2: organization and cultural approaches to oneness and flourishing*. Palgrave-Macmillan.

Gurubatham, M. (2023, this volume). Fluid intelligence for higher order thinking: Balancing the subjective and objective for sustaining impactful wisdom in the era of disruption. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management, volume 2: organization and cultural approaches to oneness and flourishing*. Palgrave-Macmillan.

Gupta, N., & Maheshwari, A. K. (2023, Forthcoming). *Solutions for a sustainable world*. Gian Publishers.

Hiatt, S. R., Sine, W. D., & Tolbert, P. S. (2009). From Pabst to Pepsi: The deinstitutionalization of social practices and the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 54*(4), 635–667.

Isaacson, W. (2011). *Steve jobs*. Simon & Schuster.

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. Macmillan.

Kauanui, S. K., Thomas, K. D., Rubens, A., & Sherman, C. L. (2010). Entrepreneurship and spirituality: A comparative analysis of entrepreneurs' motivation. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship, 23*(4), 621–635.

Kauanui, S. K., Thomas, K. D., Sherman, C. L., Waters, G. R., & Gilea, M. (2008). Exploring entrepreneurship through the lens of spirituality. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 5*(2), 160–189.

Keen, P., & Williams, R. (2013). Value architectures for the digital business: Beyond the business model. *MIS Quarterly, 37*(2), 643–647.

Landes, D. S., Mokyr, J., & Baumol, W. J. (Eds.). (2012). *The invention of enterprise: Entrepreneurship from ancient Mesopotamia to modern times*. Princeton University Press.

Larish, J.J. (2012). *Out of focus: The story of how Kodak lost its direction*. Creative Space Publications.

Lee, C. T. (2010). Selecting technologies for constantly changing applications markets. *Research-Technology Management, 53*(1), 44–54.

Laurie, D. L., & Harreld, J. B. (2013, July–August). Six ways to sink a growth initiative. *Harvard Business Review* (pp. 1–9).

Maharishi, M. Y. (1995). *Maharishi university of management: Wholeness on the move*. Maharishi Prakshan.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023). Introduction to consciousness-based leadership and management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Vedic and other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K., & Pandey, N. (2022). Yoga sutras and spiritual entrepreneurship. In *World scientific encyclopedia of business sustainability, ethics and entrepreneurship* (pp. 291–314).

Moore, G., & McKenna, R. (2006). *Crossing the chasm: Marketing and selling disruptive products to mainstream customers*. HarperBusiness.

Nandram, S. S. (2015). *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland*. Springer.

Nandram, S. S., & Bindlish, P. K. (2017). *Managing VUCA through integrative self-management* (p. 338). Springer.

Nandram, S. S., Mourmont, G., Norlyk, E., Heaton, D. P., & Bindlish, P. K. (2018). Understanding entrepreneurial decision-making by objectivizing subtle cues. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 15*(5), 398–423.

O'Reilly, C., Harreld, J. B., & Tushman, M. (2009). Organizational ambidexterity: IBM and emerging business opportunities. *California Management Review, 51*(4), 75–99.

O'Reilly, C. A., III., & Tushman, M. L. (2021). *Lead and disrupt: How to solve the innovator's dilemma*. Stanford University Press.

Porter, M. (2001, July–August). Strategy and the internet. *Harvard Business Review* (pp. 1–19).

Roberts, E. (2007). Managing invention and innovation. *Research Technology Management* (pp. 35–55).

Rogers, E. M. (1995). *Diffusion of Innovations*. Free Press.

Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001). Causation and effectuation: Toward a theoretical shift from economic inevitability to entrepreneurial contingency. *Academy of Management Review, 26*(2), 243–263.

Shane, S. (Ed.). (2009). *The handbook of technology and innovation management*. John Wiley & Sons.

Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(1), 217–226.

Schumpeter, J. A. (2013). *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. Routledge.

Stilgoe, J., Owen, R., & Macnaghten, P. (2020). Developing a framework for responsible innovation. In *The ethics of nanotechnology, geoengineering and clean energy* (pp. 347–359). Routledge.

Thaler, R. H. (2012). *The winner's curse: Paradoxes and anomalies of economic life*. Simon and Schuster.

Tripsas, M (2000). Commercializing emerging technology through complementary assets. In G. Day & P Shoemaker (Eds.), *Wharton on managing emerging technologies*. Wiley.

Von Hippel, E. (1986). Lead users: A source of novel product concepts. *Management Science, 32*(7), 791–805.

Von Hippel, E. (2006). *Democratizing innovation*. MIT Press.

Weick, K. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2nd ed.) Addison.

Wilber, K. (1993). *The spectrum of consciousness*. Quest Books.

Yogalakshmi, K., & Latha, G. (2015). Effect of selected yoga-asanas, pranayama and meditation on creativity of entrepreneurs. *International Research Journal of Business and Management, 8*(9).

Yu, H., & Malnight, T. (2016, July). The best companies aren't afraid to replace their most profitable products. *Harvard Business Review.*

Zahra, S. A. (2008). The virtuous cycle of discovery and creation of entrepreneurial opportunities. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, 2*(3), 243–257.

CHAPTER 10

Creating Safe Reflective Spaces: Fostering Organizational Development and Flourishing

Beate Jelstad Løvaas and Gry Espedal

> It struck me that by throwing myself into deep water in the group, it perhaps became easier to handle the challenges at work.
>
> —David, a participant in the group reflection

Introduction

Spaces, or bounded social settings, play an important role in fostering organizational changes (Lee et al., 2020). Organizational spaces are crucial to studies on leadership, identity, and relationships at work, among others; notably, recent studies have challenged the traditional view on spaces as stable physical environments (Stephenson et al., 2020).

B. J. Løvaas (✉) · G. Espedal
VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway
e-mail: beate.lovaas@vid.no

G. Espedal
e-mail: gry.espedal@vid.no

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_10

Research has highlighted how spaces of group reflection (physical and digital spaces) enable changes in actions and practices, as well as facilitate the identity processes of individual actors, both in times of crisis (Espedal & Løvaas, 2022) and in ordinary times (Løvaas & Vråle, 2020). For instance, hope processes in organizations in times of crisis are facilitated through group reflections in safe spaces and allotting time for slow thinking, enabling new practices and actions of hope to occur (Espedal & Løvaas, 2022). A study conducted under normal circumstances on the value of group reflection indicates that group reflections enabled individual actors to move inward via identity processes, such as increased awareness of one's emotions and boundaries. The participants also seemed to move forward, gaining courage and strength from the managerial group reflection to implement new value-related actions (Løvaas & Vråle, 2020).

In a *safe* space, group members "dare to share." They freely and openly share their stories and challenges, as well as present new ideas. Hence, such space is safe for interpersonal risk taking (Edmondson, 1999). A safe space is reinforced when sharing vulnerability with trusted others, it is regarded as a space where leaders may "take off the mask" (Brown 2012, cited in Corlett et al., 2021). Such an environment may allow for identification with others to foster individual growth and transformative learning. Growth and mutual learning may occur through the mechanism of recognition, in which individuals recognize aspects of themselves in others. In addition, integration may take place, in which individuals incorporate aspects of others into their own selves (Humbred & Rouse, 2016).

In short, *reflection* refers to the act of paying "serious attention" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 9). Group reflection, as opposed to individual reflection, can offer additional information that may lie outside one's own thoughts. Collective reflection presents an opportunity for managers to bring the unspoken and unconscious to the forefront, thus creating a space for identifying values. Herein, group reflection can strengthen value consciousness and reflexivity among the participants. As values play an important role in guiding action (Kraatz et al., 2020), value consciousness may change and improve practice (Aadland & Askeland, 2017). This is exemplified by the positive relationship between managers' value consciousness and innovation in organizations (Nygaard & Løvaas, 2019). Thus, having a space to reflect on actions, practices, and

work situations may facilitate value consciousness and drive changes and improvements in practice. This way, group reflection may link everyday practices with the overall purpose of the organization. From a learning perspective, we learn from reflecting on practices/experiences (and not from practices/experiences alone). Therefore, facilitating learning involves creating a room for reflection (Jamissen, 2011).

Based on the description above, safe reflective spaces are characterized as environments that are safe for interpersonal risk taking, environments where participants dare to share, and where the group reflects as a team in an open and appreciative way. The literature described above also indicates that these safe reflective spaces support the emergence of new practices in different ways. However, these spaces "cannot, on their own, explain the emergence of new practices" (Lee et al., 2020, p. 99). To obtain a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms facilitating these changes and gain practical knowledge on how such spaces can be created, the aims of this chapter are twofold. Based on data from an educational management program wherein executive leaders from different work sectors reflected together in supervised settings, we first explore the steps that may enable a move toward a safe reflective space. Second, we investigate how these safe reflective spaces drive changes in actions and practices, as well as growth, in the individual actors. As such, the following two research questions guide the chapter: (a) How can safe reflective spaces be created? and (b) How do safe reflective spaces enable changes in actions?

Theorizing Safe Reflective Spaces

The two research questions are explored through the lenses of psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), appreciative inquiry (AI) (Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1987), high-quality connections (HQC) (Stephens et al., 2012), and relational agency (Sundet & Carlsen, 2019), which are our theoretical points of departure in this study.

Psychological Safety

When investigating how safe spaces can be created, the concept of psychological safety is regarded relevant. Psychological safety in teams is defined as "a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. For the most part, this belief tends to be tacit – taken for granted"

(Edmondson, 1999, p. 354). Although beliefs about interpersonal norms are discussed explicitly in a group, it does not change the essence of team psychological safety. It involves a sense of confidence that the team will not harm, reject, embarrass, or punish. It entails a safe space for sharing ideas. The construct of psychological safety has roots in early research on organizational change and is related to team learning behavior. Both contextual support and team leader behavior may support team psychological safety. Some team leader behaviors are being proactive, warm, coaching oriented, and organized (Edmondson, 1999).

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

The type of questions used in a group reflection session is of importance when aiming to build up the participants and create a safe reflective space. Therefore, the questions used in the sessions are not randomly selected but premised on AI. AI processes often involve inquiry through the crafting of discovery-, dream-, and design-oriented questions (Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1987). AI is highlighted as a structural feature that builds on what gives life to people, their organization, and the opportunity-saturated world around them (Cooperrider & Fry, 2020). Instead of looking at human systems as machines or mechanistic "problems-to-be-solved," the approach embraces the miracle of life and its strengths. Notably, a critique of this organizational development approach has been raised, namely, it ignores difficult, painful, and conflicting realities. However, it is highlighted that it is not about positive versus negative human experience but the choice to inquire into "what is life" (Cooperrider & Fry, 2020, p. 269). As such, it is highlighted that it might as well reach its highest potential in crises. The craft of asking questions and the notion of human beings changing best when being at their strongest indicate that asking for strengths and dreams holds much potential, especially in crises such as pandemics. The AI method is also considered an essential starting point for the flourishing of hope in human systems.

High-Quality Connections (HQC)

We investigate the second research question of how safe spaces enable changes in action through the lens of HQC and relational agency. Positive organizational scholars have given attention to work relationships, as evidenced by the substantial body of research on HQC as a

powerful source of development in organizations (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003; Stephens et al., 2012). HQC is the term used to designate short-term-dyadic, positive interactions at work (Stephens et al., 2012). It builds on the living connection that exists between two people when interaction that involves mutual awareness occurs. This does not need to have a connection to prior history; rather, it can involve micro-bits of inter-relating at work that contribute to a growing relationship. HQC is based on two clusters of connection-quality indicators: one focusing on the positivity of the subjective and emotional experiences of each individual in the connection and the other on the structural features of the connection that enhance the potentiality and responsiveness of the connection. As such, this quality can be sensed by the feeling of vitality in the connection, a sense of positive regard, and felt mutuality.

Cognitive, emotional, and behavioral mechanisms build HQC (Stephens et al., 2012). Individuals' cognitions are key building blocks for connections in being aware of the presence of others through other-awareness, establishing an impression of others, and perspective-taking of the situation. This way, HQC can be cultivated. The emotional mechanism helps us know that we are connected with others, which builds on positive emotions. Through emotional connections, individuals share emotional experiences. Finally, the behavioral mechanisms of HQC are demonstrated through values such as respectful engagement, task enabling to help people perform chores, and play, which refers to the human capacity to participate in playful activities. Based on the above description, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects are viewed as pathways to HQC. At the team level, cultivating HQC in reflection groups, such as through perspective-taking and other-awareness, is relevant for safe reflective spaces to occur and as an underlying mechanism facilitating creativity and changes in actions and practices. As such, we investigate the underlying mechanisms of how safe spaces drive changes in action through the lens of HQC, as well as relational agency, which is elucidated in the following subsection.

Relational Agency

The role of reflection is a central aspect of the agency perspective that involves awareness of possibilities in everyday work situations and group sessions. Based on the findings by Løvaas and Vråle (2020), we argue that managerial group reflection on relational work situations may nurture

relational agency. By relational agency, we refer to a "reflexive and purposive capacity to initiate and carry out actions for improving relationships in the workplace" (Sundet & Carlsen, 2019, p. 265). The agency perspective proposes a lasting capacity that goes beyond the momentary meetings highlighted in the research literature on HQC (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Rather, experiences of HQC over time may nurture the more lasting capacity of relational agency. Thus, relational agency is an important approach, as it has the power to influence what many people consider the most important aspect of life—relationships. It also enhances the quality of relationships which, in turn, promote the flourishing of humanity. Notably, an empirical project discovered that appreciative interviewing is an energizing and helpful approach in creating relational agency (Sundet & Carlsen, 2019). In a practical sense, investigating and finding ways to foster relational agency among managers may play an important role in organizations and potentially contribute to the betterment of workplaces.

Research Context and Methods

Context

This qualitative intervention study emerged from a management educational program wherein the executive participants were engaged in supervised group reflection processes. The specific course of 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) called "Relational Leadership and Coaching" lasted for one academic year and is part of a master's program in value-based leadership in Norway.

The intervention was the supervised group's reflection over one academic year. Four gatherings throughout the academic year 2019/2020 consisted of group reflections in supervised settings, as well as teaching, both before and during COVID-19. The first three gatherings were held at a campus in Oslo, while the last teaching block and group supervision sessions in Spring 2020 during COVID-19 were organized online/digitally as synchronized video meetings. The managers participated in four half-day group supervision sessions, reflecting on their challenges at work and everyday practices. The group reflections linked everyday practice with the overall values and purposes of the manager, the managers' organization, and the plan of the study program (see the Appendix for

further descriptions of the purposes, aims, and descriptions of the learning program and exercises).

The participants were executive leaders from different work sectors. As such, the group reflection processes in supervised settings that took place outside their daily institutional environments produced changes in actions within their organizations. Both authors were engaged in teaching, as well as facilitating and supervising the group reflection processes. When the course was completed, the authors' curiosity regarding the changes in action among the participants, the growth in how they perceived themselves, and how this led to a situation of flourishing in their professional lives motivated this study. We observed that openness was developed and practiced in the supervision groups, even at an early stage. Our curiosity was drawn toward investigating how spaces of openness and safety were established, which is associated with the first question guiding this chapter. In addition, we investigated the role of such safe spaces in the changes that took place in the managers' actions and growth, which correspond to the second research question of this study.

Data Collection

The focus group interviews with seven of the managers attending the described course and management program comprised the primary data source in this study (20 transcribed pages). In addition, we relied on 24 essays from 12 of the managers (10 women and 2 men) attending the course, totaling approximately 200 pages (double spaced). Furthermore, the authors' observations and experiences during the supervised group reflections and their debrief meetings after the session also formed part of the data sources in this study, especially for the first question guiding this study.

The executive managers who participated in the course of relational leadership and coaching from September 2019 to May 2020 were invited to take part in focus group interviews in September 2020. Seven of the managers took part in the group interview, among whom six were female and one was male. They were middle managers in public healthcare organizations, such as hospitals, as well as nonprofit religious organizations, such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway. The participants were invited to a two-hour focus group interview to reflect on their learnings and the mechanisms of the process. The researchers/authors of this study used an open-ended semi-structured interview guide for the

focus group session, focusing on the participants' leadership challenges which they presented at the beginning of the year, asking about possible developments, movements, or changes related to their challenges and the factors that may have triggered those changes. The focus group interview is a central source in exploring the second question of this chapter.

We are also giving voice to 24 essays written by 12 of the managers attending the course and educational program before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the managers in the first essay described the relational and practice-based challenges they face as managers, the second essay concerns possible ways, developments, and directions forward in relation to their challenges experienced in the middle of the pandemic. The second essay was written toward the end of the academic course after the participants attended the supervised group reflection and perused the teaching and reading list materials. The essays were part of an exam in the course on relational leadership and coaching, which is part of the master's program of value-based leadership in Norway. The exam was graded as either approved or not approved.

Analyzing Data

Information from the focus group interview was recorded and transcribed. When analyzing the data, we independently developed initial codes and categories. Thereafter, we discussed our first codes and categories and jointly developed refined categories. In line with Locke et al. (2016), we treated coding as a starting point rather than an endpoint, that is, questions were derived from the coding process. An example of a question derived from the coding process with data highlighting the changes and growth in how the participants perceive their roles is as follows: what happened in the supervised group reflection sessions where the value of openness was practiced?

Systematic coding and thematic analyses of the data were performed using NVivo. Our data analyses were also inspired by a narrative approach, which implies moving from a focus of "what actually happened" toward describing "how [people] make sense of what happened" (Riessman, 2008). We also relied on the theories of psychological safety, HQC, AI, and relational agency to understand the material. When analyzing data, we went back and forth between empirical data and existing theory, signaling the use of an abductive approach (Bryman, 2012).

Ethical Considerations and Critical Reflections

This study was approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, that participation was voluntary, how the data would be used, and about confidentiality. A critical reflection in the current study concerns the role of the researchers, who were also supervisors of the reflection groups. Moreover, the researchers delivered lectures and were responsible for the course. In this situation, it was vital for the focus group interviews to take place after the course was completed and after the grades were given (approved or non-approved). This way, the participants had weaker bonds and dependency on the researchers and could perhaps reflect more freely about their experiences in the focus group interviews. To ensure the reliability of the data, we strived to establish an environment of a safe space for the focus group interview using the steps identified below.

In sum, the authors' observations during the supervised group reflections and their experiences during the debrief meetings after each session are the main data sources utilized in exploring the first research question. The analysis of the focus group interview with seven managers is the central data source in investigating the second research question. The seven managers had finished/completed the course and, thus, had been participants in a supervised reflection group for one academic year (which is the intervention in the study).

Safe Reflective Spaces—Creation and Mechanisms

How Can Safe Reflective Spaces Be Created?

To understand how the supervised group reflections emerged as a space where openness was developed and practiced, we identified five steps that may enable a transition toward such a safe reflective space, characterized by an environment where the participants freely share their stories and where the group reflects as a team in an appreciative way.

Establishing the group The first step concerns the process of establishing the group. To build psychological and social safety in a group with participants who do not know each other, the first group meeting involves laying down some rules. Primarily, the supervisor of the group presents some key rules. An example is confidentiality; anything shared in the group remains within the group. Furthermore, the participants

are allowed to tell others about their own project/story but not the stories that are shared by other group members. The purpose and rationale behind the time spent in groups reflecting together are also explicitly elaborated upon by the supervisor of the group as part of the process of establishing the group. Thereafter, one by one, the group members would suggest norms, rules, and behaviors that they view as significant. They also answer the question of what they want and need from the group in order to make the group meetings valuable and fruitful for them. Establishing the group as one unit involves agreeing on the norms, rules, and behaviors for this specific group. However, this first step may not be enough for the participants to start sharing their stories and leadership challenges freely.

Generating knowledge of group members A second step toward a safe reflective space involves getting to know each other or generating knowledge of the group members. In the first half-day group meeting, time was spent on becoming familiar with the group members. Each member narrated who they are by reflecting on questions such as what is important to them in life; what life events have meant a lot to them, affected their choice to become leaders, and influence their way of leading; what factors shaped them as leaders; and their values, hopes, and dreams in their leadership work. Remarkably, the participants dared to open up during their narrations. As stated by a participant of the group reflections and an informant of the focus group interview: "Hearing others' stories gave me the courage to delve into the different situations. I dared to open up instead of being ashamed of my responses." Getting to know each other by generating knowledge of the group members nurtures the experience of social safety in the group and, hence, is an important step toward the attainment of a safe reflective space.

Appreciative questioning Appreciative questioning was utilized in the group sessions. Some hopeful questions that were introduced in the group sessions were as follows: What would you say is the most important element to work on to become a good leader? What have you done to challenge yourself to become a better leader? What is your best hope for the further progression of your leadership process?

Hopeful questions can help people articulate their situations and find a spiritual way to move beyond them (Green et al., 2006). One of the informants shared that after the group settings, he started to ask organizational members what kind of hopeful dreams they had despite the

pandemic situation: "What kind of cooperation are you dreaming of?" As such, the leader turned a difficult situation from a threat to a possibility of connecting to the bigger picture.

Structurizing the group session When the group is established and group members have shared stories from their lives relevant to their roles as leaders, the next step (step four) of creating safety in the group pertains to the process of *structurizing* the group meetings, so each session is the same. A predictable structure may contribute to psychological and social safety, as one knows what to do and where to go. In addition, a predictable structure may contribute to a sense of creativity of the participants in the group.

A predictable structure involves both the content of the sessions and the available time for each participant. An example of a structured session starts with one of the participants narrating his/her leadership challenges to one group member while the rest of the group listens. After the narration, the rest of the group members share their reflections in a fixed format by reflecting upon questions such as the following: what special detail in the narration made an impression on you?; in your opinion, what was the intention of the narrator?; what related experience did you remember from your role as a leader?; and what do you want to tell the owner of the experience (in line with Lundby, 2005). The reflections were instructive and were to be shared in an open and appreciative way. The reflections mirror the narrator and provide the narrator with new insights. As underscored by one of the participants in the group: "The reflection group discussions gave me ideas on how to handle frustrating situations." The reflections are also expected to be informative and valuable for the other participants.

This fixed format of questions can be simplified for the team to reflect upon the following:

a. What did you hear and notice?
b. Did you think of any related experience from your own life while listening to the narrator?
c. What do you want to ask, acknowledge, affirm, or tell the narrator?

Predictable routines can also include where the group members are physically placed. For instance, while the narrator listened to the team reflecting upon his/her story and challenges, he/she listened to the group

reflecting together without answering questions, only listening and taking notes, and without maintaining eye contact with the group. This was done by the narrator by turning his/her chair in the opposite direction out of the circle, turning his/her back to the group (in physical rooms), or turning off the video camera (in digital rooms). Structurizing the last part of a session was done by asking the narrator to summarize his/her learnings and key takeaways from the session for future reflections. These are examples of a predictable structure of group meetings that may support the emergence of safety in groups.

Reflecting in teams Based on the four building blocks that may enable a move toward safety in groups, step five emphasizes the *reflecting* part of the space/group session (and hence, the safe *reflective* space). Team reflection starts with the group members listening intently to the narrator with open minds (Andersen, 1994), followed by reflecting together in an appreciative way, for instance, in a fixed format as outlined above. As the first phase of team reflection starts with listening, the group members are asked to listen at three levels: listening inward, listening outward (focused listening), and non-verbal listening, which is also called listening globally (Vråle, 2015). Listening inward is related to reflection question b outlined above. Listening outward and listening globally are associated with reflection questions.

Listening and being present go hand in hand. A precondition for listening is the practice of being present. Presence is also important to connect with another human and is a base condition for building HQC, which will be described in the next section. In the group reflection sessions, the participants also appreciatively gave feedback to each other. Each person in the group received feedback from the other participants regarding skills and resources the participants see in the person, regarding the steps they think would be helpful for the person to take while working on the challenge, and why they think the person will manage to work on the challenges.

In sum, five steps are identified as building blocks that may enable a transition toward safe reflective spaces: *establishing* the group, *generating* knowledge of group members, appreciative *questioning, structurizing* the group meetings, and *reflecting* as a team by listening deeply before speaking, where the practice of being present is essential. All steps involve the art of questioning, and practical examples of different types of questions are offered in the description of all five steps.

How Do Safe Reflective Spaces Drive Changes in Actions?

In the following sections, we investigate the underlying mechanisms supporting new practices and facilitating individual development and growth among the participants. In other words, what happens in a safe reflective space which enables changes in actions and individual growth among the participants? The findings related to the second question of this study about understanding the underlying mechanisms supporting changes in actions can be divided into two categories: safe reflective spaces as environments for *experimenting* and environments for *experiencing*. Both dimensions of a safe reflective space support the emergence of changes in actions and individual growth.

Safe reflective spaces are characterized as *experimental* rooms or test rooms that mirror what is happening, thus facilitating new ways of actions. The quote given in the introduction illustrates this notion. David, a participant who openly shared in the supervised reflection group meetings, stated afterward in the focus group interview: "Dare to share if you want to achieve a good project. It is a good exercise." Thus, the space felt safe enough to challenge the participants and dare them to try things out. In fact, the informant called the group reflection sessions a "catalyst" that makes "you more confident to handle challenges when you go out." To "go out" refers to real (working) life, and the group is a safe space to try things out first. Hence, a room for experimenting outside their institutional settings (group reflection) supports changes in actions at their respective workplaces (organizations).

The safe reflective space characterized as an experimental environment that facilitates the emergence of new practices is described by a participant/manager taking part in the group reflections. She took the initiative to debrief practices in difficult situations, saying, "The employees often have questions with regard to treatments and so on. Now, we sit down and talk about their concerns." After trying it out in the safe reflective space, she said, "It was not a waste of time. I was conscious of its importance." Thereafter, she introduced the practice of debriefing in their workplace. After trying it out in the experimental room, she said, "I have chosen to prioritize it in a hectic workday." Hence, the matters tackled during the discussions and dialogs in the group were brought to the participants' workplaces. These illustrations indicate how safe reflective spaces characterized by rooms for experimenting may support the emergence of changes in actions and the evolution of new practices.

Safe reflective spaces are also characterized by environments for experiencing. More specifically, experiences of recognition were prominent among the participants in the reflection groups. "In the reflection groups, we started listening to each other's stories and discovered we were not alone. I started thinking about how I could be a positive force." Another leader/informant/participant said: "It gave me ideas on how to handle frustrating situations." A reason why the leaders managed to alter their thinking was said to be connected to listening to others' stories and discovering they were not alone. The experiences of recognition that they were not the only ones striving gave courage and strength to the managers, which they brought with them to their workplaces. Thus, a space for experiencing recognition was created in the group sessions. The reflection group engaged in identification through the mechanism of recognition. As the participants freely shared their stories, the individuals or group members recognized aspects of themselves that they share with others, and through the mechanism of integration, the individuals incorporated aspects of others into their own selves (Humbred & Rouse, 2016). Thus, identity processes are facilitated by *experiencing* recognition and identification.

Two dimensions are described concerning the mechanisms supporting individual growth and changes in actions: safe reflective spaces as environments for *experimenting* and as environments for *experiencing*. While the first category or mechanism (experimenting) seems to mainly capture the emergence of new practices, the latter (experiencing) mainly facilitates the identity processes and individual growth of the actors.

Discussion

In this article, we investigated how safe reflective spaces are created in group reflection sessions and how they enable changes in actions and facilitate individual growth among the participants. We will further discuss three implications of this work: (1) the implication of the five steps toward safe spaces to establish a flourishing community; (2) a precondition of this work in being present and listening; and (3) the flourishing experience of developing the self and relational agency. Flourish can be defined as "to grow well, to prosper, to thrive, to live life to the fullest" (Laszlo, 2020 p. 310). In the ideal state of a flourishing community, everyone is cared for. It is unlikely that communities have reached this state, at least for a prolonged period. However, seeking toward flourishing communities and working toward human flourishing can be viewed as ultimate goals.

The Five Steps in Safe Spaces to Establish a Flourishing Community

The findings in this study indicate that safe spaces for group reflection are created through five building blocks, in which establishing the group in terms of agreeing on the norms, rules, and behavior for the group is the first and important step. In line with Lee et al. (2020), "interactions scripts" or concrete guidelines for interaction and participation rules were identified as critical for the emergence of positive relational dynamics in teams. Step two, which is generating knowledge of the group members, is in line with Addy (2022), highlighting the significance of professionals expressing their identity through the story they tell about their life and, hence, the importance of creating safe spaces where individuals can share their stories as a basis for professional practice. Furthermore, a predictable structure in group supervision (step four) may foster safety in groups (Løvaas & Vråle, 2020).

Approaches from AI and appreciative questioning (step three) offer guidance for incorporating possible images of the future (Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1987). The tradition of appreciative questions and solution-focused approach underscores what brings relational connections from being problem-oriented to becoming future-oriented through a process of focusing on dreams and hopeful moments (de Shazer, 1985). Regardless of what the person has been before, these questions help him/her become aware of the desirable standards for the future; as such, this can be considered an inquiry that brings the future into view (Berg & Szabó, 2005). Small, goal-oriented questions help individuals in challenging situations to experience life-giving moments or a notion of the eradication of the problems (Waters et al., 2013). Asking questions and giving appreciative feedback is leading to positive changes (Röhrig, 2005). Thus, we find inquiring questions especially useful in creating safe spaces, where it is possible to reflect on actions and practices (Espedal & Carlsen, 2021) to build a flourishing community.

The Practice of Being Present—A Precondition for Safe Reflective Spaces

A precondition for reflecting, inquiring, and deeply listening in teams (step five) is the practice of being present, in which managers may serve as role models. Being present involves being connected with oneself, to

the here and now. Listening inward, one of the three listening levels described, involves being present and connected with oneself. Meditation and reflection are related concepts in which meditation is viewed as a "reflection on your actions" (Gupta, 2021). Moreover, the cycle of action, learning, and reflection is viewed as operationalized meditation (ibid.). Reflection is also linked to mindfulness in organizations (Jordan et al., 2009), and reflection in teams starts with listening intently with an open mind. This way, allowing space for silence in the reflection groups seems to be significant. The art and practice of being present is a precondition for listening and for group reflection in safe spaces. Managers play a role in creating safety in teams (Edmondson, 1999), with the five identified steps in this study constituting a fruitful approach.

The Flourishing Experience of Developing the Self and Relational Agency

The findings from the second question guiding this chapter regarding the underlying mechanisms indicate that experiencing recognition in the reflection group is a mechanism that facilitates individual growth and changes in action. The safe reflective space helped the participants develop themselves and find their way. How then can recognition be experienced by participants in the group? A precondition for experiencing recognition and HQC is the art and practice of being present. In addition to being connected to oneself as described above, being present also involves being psychologically available and turning one's attention to another individual. There are multiple distractions, but when individuals direct their attention to each other, they activate a sense of mutual connection. Being aware of the other person's presence and behavior makes it possible to establish this type of HQC. In safe reflective spaces, HQC at the team level likely exists, as team members are present by listening at three levels: listening inward, listening outward or focused, and listening globally. This way, the emotional connection developed in the situation helps the group members take part and engage with the situation. Thus, HQC at the group level may facilitate the experiences of recognition for the narrator and among the participants in the group. This mechanism, the process and experience of recognition through HQC, may, in turn, make individuals unboundarized and nurture their creativity and openness, leading to changes in their actions. This way, safe reflective spaces facilitate transformation and, ultimately, the flourishing of humanity.

When experiencing momentary meetings of HQC in the reflection group over time, a more lasting relational capacity called relational agency (Sundet & Carlsen, 2019) is likely to emerge. A previously mentioned quote from the focus group interview illustrates this point: "In the reflection groups, we started listening to each other's stories and discovered that we were not alone. I started thinking about how I could be a positive force." Reflecting upon how to be a positive force goes beyond momentary micro-bits of inter-relating and points toward more lasting capacities and, hence, relational agency.

In line with this argument and based on the findings by Løvaas and Vråle (2020), we argue that safe reflective spaces may nurture relational agency. The emergence of relational agency and the capacity of individual actors are brought and applied beyond the safe reflective space, such as relational work situations at the workplace. Hence, safe reflective spaces and group reflection on practices and everyday relational work situations can be perceived as an avenue to seed relational agency among managers through experiences of openness, identification, and recognition in the group, thereby enabling individual actors to develop and driving changes in their actions. Thus, managerial group reflection in terms of safe reflective spaces can be a feasible approach to cultivating relational agency. When at its most fruitful, relational agency contributes to the betterment of workplaces surrounded by compassion, empathy, and a loving and caring atmosphere. This social, relational, or *interpersonal dimension* and the described *individual unboundarized experiences* constitute two approaches to facilitate the flourishing humanity thus a flourishing society.

Conclusion

In order to move toward an environment that we understand as a safe reflective space, five steps are identified in this chapter: establishing the group, generating knowledge of group members, appreciative questioning, structurizing the group meetings, and reflecting as a team by deeply listening before speaking, where the practice of being present is highly significant. With regard to the question of how safe reflective spaces enable changes in actions, two dimensions are described: environments for experimenting and environments for experiencing. Experimenting or trying new ways of acting in a safe reflective space outside their institutional settings encouraged them to bring these new actions to their workplace. Furthermore, experiences of recognition in the reflection

groups nurtured courage, strengths, and individual growth among the participants. Thus, safe reflective spaces facilitate changes in actions, as well as growth, in the individual actors; hence, they can be considered a feasible approach in promoting the flourishing of humanity.

Appendix: Relational Leadership and Coaching Course

As part of a master's program in value-based leadership, students are provided with a course in relational leadership and coaching. The course of 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) includes 30 hours of teaching and 30 hours spent in groups with supervisors (a total of eight half-day sessions in supervised reflection groups). The course is divided into two parts (I and II) that build on each other. The exam is graded as approved or not approved.

The purpose of the relational leadership and coaching course is to provide students with insights into relational leadership and to develop their coaching skills. In the course, the students are taught about themes such as relational leadership, coaching, organizing, compassion, and hope practices, as well as how they can enhance their strengths to become effective leaders and establish good relationships. The coaching part is premised on positive organizational leadership perspectives. In the group reflections, the leadership development of each participant is in focus. As part of the reflection on relational leadership skills, each student is encouraged to come up with a leadership project in terms of topics or challenges that he/she needs to work on and to carry out this leadership project throughout the academic year. In August 2019, the managers chosen for this study started with the study program of relational leadership and coaching. It ended in May 2020. Further on, we will describe how the group sessions in the program were operated to develop the students' relational leadership skills, as well as focus on how they were applying their skills in their organizations.

During the first group setting with the supervisors (Part I), the managers shared their stories of how they became leaders. They reflected on questions such as what factors shaped them as leaders, what life events have meant a lot to them and affected their choice to become leaders, what is important to them in life, and what their hopes and dreams are in their leadership work. Additionally, during the next half-day group session, the managers shared the leadership challenges they wanted to

work on throughout the year. Presenting the challenges to the group, they were asked to reflect on their strengths as leaders, their attitudes and skills, and what they wanted to develop further. After presenting the leadership challenges to the group, the leaders received feedback and reflections from the other participants in the group.

During the second gathering two months later, the leaders were asked to present two items related to what they had done in working on their leadership challenges. They were asked to prioritize the most important tasks for them as managers and explain whether they had changed their views on how to fill their leadership roles. They were also asked to share any updates regarding their leadership projects. All students presented as well as reflected on the others' leadership projects. After the second session, the participants completed essay exams in which they were asked to choose a topic and write about how they had worked on the chosen leadership challenge in relation to theories from the reading list.

During the third session (Part II), the students offered feedback to one another, reflecting on where they are now in relation to their leadership challenges, what they were happy with having achieved, and what was the next step for them. During the fourth session, the participants/leaders summarized in groups the learning points of their leadership challenges. The fourth session also included an hour of appreciative and acknowledging words to each individual in the group by sharing what they appreciated in each group member.

In the exam, the students were asked to choose how they had worked on their leadership challenge using two theories from the curriculum. The theories from the curriculum could be themes such as compassion, hope, courage, gentleness, coaching, recognition, signature strengths, supervision, or becoming a leader. In the essay, the students were asked to discuss their leadership challenges in relation to the two chosen theories to strengthen and expand their leadership skills and organizational perspectives.

References

Aadland, E., & Askeland, H. (2017). *Verdibevisst ledelse* [Value-conscious leadership]. Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Addy, T. (2022). 'Seeking conviviality' as a core concept for community development. In *Developing just and inclusive communities*. Regnum Books International.

Alvesson, M., & Sköldberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Andersen, T. (1994). *Reflekterende processer. Samtaler om samtalerne* [Reflecting processes: Talks about the talkers]. Dansk Psykologisk København.

Berg, I. K., & Szabó, P. (2005). *Brief coaching for lasting solutions*. W.W. Norton.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Fry, R. (2020). Appreciative inquiry in a pandemic: An improbable pairing. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 56*(3), 266–271.

Corlett, S., Ruane, M., & Mavin, S. (2021). Learning (not) to be different: The value of vulnerability in trusted and safe identity work spaces. *Management and Learning, 52*(4), 424–441.

De Shazer, S. (1985). *Keys to solution in brief therapy*. W.W. Norton.

Dutton, J. E., & Heaphy, E. D. (2003). The power of high-quality connections. *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations of a New Discipline, 3*, 263–278.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*, 350–383.

Espedal, G., & Carlsen, A. (2021). Someone to love: Construction of the good and organizational value inquiry 12th International Symposium on Process Organization Studies Online.

Espedal, G., & Løvaas, B. J. (2022). "Carriers of hope." Creating organizational spaces of hope during Covid-19. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 19*(4), 341–363.

Green, L., Oades, L., & Grant, A. (2006). Cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused life coaching: Enhancing goal striving, well-being, and hope. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 1*(3), 142–149.

Gupta, A. (2021, May 21–23). *Personal statement*. International Conference on Consciousness-based leadership and management: Mapping the path to a flourishing humanity.

Humbred, B. K., & Rouse, E. D. (2016). Seeing you in me and me in you: Personal identification in the phases of mentoring relationships. *Academy of Management Review, 41*(3), 435–455.

Jamissen, G. (2011). Om erfaringskunnskap og læring: Et essay. (About experiental knowledge and learning: An essay). *Uniped, 34*, 30–40.

Jordan, S., Messner, M., & Becker, A. (2009). Reflection and mindfulness in organizations: Rationales and possibilities for integration. *Management Learning, 40*(4), 465–473. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507609339687

Kraatz, M. S., Flores, R., & Chandler, D. (2020). The value of values for institutional analysis. *Academy of Management Annals, 14*(2), 474–512.

Laszlo, C. (2020). Quantum management: The practice and science of flourishing enterprise. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 17*(4), 301–315.

Lee, M. Y., Mazmanian, M., & Perlow, L. (2020). Fostering positive relational dynamics: The power of spaces and interaction script. *Academy of Management Journal, 63*(1), 96–123.

Locke, K., Feldman, M. S., & Golden-Biddle, K. (2016). Discovery, validation, and live coding. In K. D. Elsbach & R. M. Kramer (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative organizational research: Innovative pathways and methods* (pp. 371–379). Routledge.

Løvaas, B. J., & Vråle, G. B. (2020). The value of group reflection. In H. Askeland, G. Espedal, B. J. Løvaas, & S. Sirris (Eds.), *Understanding values work: Institutional perspectives in organizations and leadership* (pp. 265–285). Palgrave Macmillan.

Lundby, G. (2005). Reflekterende team som hedrende seremoni. (Reflecting team as definitional ceremony). *Fokus på familien (Focus on the Family)*, *3*, 143–161.

Nygaard, J., & Løvaas, B. J. (2019). Hva er verdien av verdibevissthet? [What is the value of value consciousness?]. *Magma, 2*, 55–64.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.

Röhrig, P. (2005). Solution focused feedback in management. In M. McKergow & J. Clarke (Eds.), *Positive approaches to change: Applications of solutions focus and appreciative inquiry at work* (pp. 131–139). Solutions Books.

Srivastva, S., & Cooperrider, D. (1987). Appreciative inquiry into organizational life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development, 1*(1), 129–169.

Stephens, P., Heaphy, E., & Dutton, J. E. (2012). High-quality connection. In K. S. Cameron & G. M. Speitzer (Eds.), *The handbook of positive organizational scholarship* (pp. 385–400). Oxford University Press.

Stephenson, K. A., Kuismin, A., Putnam, L. L., & Sivunen, A. (2020). Process studies of organizational space. *Academy of Management Annals, 14*(2), 797–827.

Sundet, J., & Carlsen, A. (2019). Sweet dreams (are made of this): Cultivating relational agency through high-quality connections in the workplace. In R. Burke & A. Richardson (Eds.), *Creating psychologically healthy workplaces* (pp. 251–269). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Vråle, G. B. (2015). *Veiledning når det røyner på* [Supervision in difficult times]. Gyldendal Akademisk.

Waters, K. R., Altus, D. E., & Wilkinson, N. I. (2013). Promoting student professional identity, challenging our own: Narrative practices in internship seminars. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 32*(3), 1–12.

CHAPTER 11

Not Over But Through: Toward a New Model for Facilitating Organizational Transition

Jeannel King

Perhaps you have been here yourself: you are working with a group who says they want to make a change, thinking it will make everything better. The group holds all the meetings, works diligently to craft a plan, vets the plan with other experts before making it official, prints up lots of posters, gets their communications plan in order, and launches their change strategy with tremendous pride and confidence that this time things will be different. *This* time the change will stick.

Except, of course, it doesn't. The carefully crafted strategy sits in binders in people's offices. The learning from that three-day training all managers had to attend gets swept away under the never-ending demands of their day job priorities. The posters on the walls get covered by newer initiative posters, and nothing actually changes. Why?

J. King (✉)
Saybrook University, Pasadena, CA, USA
e-mail: jking@saybrook.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_11

Because, as the old saying goes, wherever you go, there you are.

An organization may be interested in change, but are its people ready for that change? Are they able to process what they are losing to make space for whom they are becoming…or are being asked to become? It is not a question of *what* but *whom* one is becoming as a result of a change effort. This *who* space of change agentry is not clean or logical; it is a space full of the emotional, psychological, spiritual, and complex *soft stuff* of being human. The s*oft stuff* is intimidating to businesses: after all, processes are easier to manage than people (Rao & Weintraub, 2013; Schein & Schein, 2018). A company's employees are not processes or resources or even metrics of success: they are human beings with feelings and needs who experience emotions when asked to change (Bridges & Bridges, 2016; Falck & Barnes, 1975; Schein & Schein, 2018).

As a change agent, I have experienced firsthand how change efforts fail when organizational leaders gloss over the underlying psychospiritual journey people go through when experiencing the loss that results from change. Leaders must be willing to not just go through this journey themselves but to serve as guides for those who are also going through the journey. Make it visible, make it okay: make it normal.

This chapter reflects my experience and insights from leading a change effort in an organization by going *through* this psychospiritual journey instead of glossing it over. I introduce a new model for facilitating organizational transition that emerged from this experience and share practical advice for leaders interested in using the TUAI Bridges model to help facilitate organizational transitions from a different level of consciousness than what produced their current state. May this work support the highest good for all beings.

Creativity and Innovation at Work

Research from the last five decades has found that not only are creativity and innovation needed in the workplace, but these things are the very factors that predict both the long-term survival of companies *and* the well-being of those who work there (Mumford & Todd, 2020). What is meant when one discusses creativity or innovation at work? In simple terms, innovation is novelty put into concrete practice in a particular setting (Cropley, 2020). Innovation in practice, however, is not that simple. As Anderson et al. (2014) explain, innovation is a two-stage

process consisting first of the generation of novel ideas and then the implementation of useful creative ideas.

Individual creativity, then, is a prerequisite for innovation (Cropley, 2020; Mumford & Todd, 2020). At the same time, worker creativity is a choice (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). As that choice is being weighed and made by a person, one's personality and mental models influence how creativity-worthy an opportunity even is (Reiter-Palmon et al., 1998). A key to corporate innovation, then, is a culture—or ecosystem—that cultivates an environment that motivates, supports, encourages, and cultivates creativity in its people (Mumford & Todd, 2020).

While companies desire innovation, their leaders often find it elusive to establish or implement (Kuratko et al., 2014). Many organizations claim to value and support creativity and innovation in the workplace, yet it is not always clear that they truly understand what is required of the company to foster creativity and innovation or even the nature of the phenomena (DeNisi & Murphy, 2020). Businesses generally seek to foster innovation by giving attention to resources, processes, and measures of success (Rao & Weintraub, 2013). These three factors are more easily measured and implemented by a company. However, the soft stuff found within a company's values, behaviors, and climate holds the greatest power for cultivating and shaping an innovation culture. As a result, many organizational change initiatives on this front do not deliver the expected results (Hughes, 2011).

Creativity, Change, and Consciousness

If organizations seek innovation, and innovation has creativity as its precursor, then what is the precursor for creativity? One's state of consciousness often plays a crucial role in a person's creative thinking and behavior (Krippner, 2020; Maheshwari et al., 2023 this volume; Richards & Goslin-Jones, 2018). While consciousness may influence each of Rhodes' (1961) Four Ps of Creativity (Person, Process, Press, and Product), consciousness plays a unique role within a person's creative process (Richards & Goslin-Jones, 2018). Wallas (1926) outlined four stages of the creative process: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. As Christensen (2020) describes, once a person has consciously worked on a problem (preparation), they then set the problem aside (incubation). During incubation, one unconsciously works on a problem, leading to an intimation that a solution might be near,

followed by an aha! flash of illumination when the solution emerges in one's consciousness. A person then resumes conscious work on the problem, verifying and evaluating the emerging option for possible transformation into a creative product.

The creative ecology, or social engineering strategy, of an organization is also dependent on the consciousness of its members (Kačerauskas, 2020). Innovation occurs in the meeting of personal competencies and organizational characteristics, with potential consequences for both parties. For individuals, innovation requires more than new skills but a new strategy for thinking, organizing knowledge, and evaluating work activities (Cropley, 2020; Toomey & Neal, 2021). When these changes conflict with the normative behavior expected by an organization's members, a person may experience uncertainty and anxiety as well as effects on one's concept of self.

An organization's social environment may limit or liberate the creative works and processes occurring within its press. A healthy creative ecology seeks to purify consciousness to remove pollutants that might put creativity at risk and bolster those that support creativity. A creative ecology, then, helps its members bring personal qualities such as presence, originality, vulnerability, and reflexivity to facilitate connection, self-awareness, and self as part of a larger system (Richards & Goslin-Jones, 2018).

The quality of one's consciousness, then, does not merely affect their ability to create: it also affects an ecology for change. Even as change promises gains and rewards for an organization, it offers loss or separation from what was once gratifying and expected in the organization (Falck & Barnes, 1975). Change can hurt, and people's feelings are a critical factor in accepting or rejecting change within their organization. More influential than how people intellectually understand a change is how they *feel* about it.

One might consider an organization's members' emotional ties to and psychological investment in its current state as the root system of a plant: the more of its root system is removed, the more harmful the loss is to the health, longevity, and even survival of the plant (Falck & Barnes, 1975). The more sudden the change in an organization, the more intense its members' emotional and psychological response: clip an important root from the plant, and it suffers regardless of the magnitude of the

change. On the other hand, gradual changes may provide less shock to an organization's emotional and psychological root systems.

Cultivating an (Innovation) Ecosystem in a Corporation: A Caselet

> Let us cultivate our garden.
> —Voltaire

How might one go about cultivating a healthy and thriving innovation ecosystem in a corporate setting? One way is to elevate one's consciousness and live it into being, even as one builds it. I found myself facing just such an opportunity with the following company caselet.

The Company

This company (let us call it *Voltaire)* is one of the oldest and largest privately held construction companies in the United States. Based in the Midwest and building nationwide, Voltaire specializes in complex construction: the more complex the project, the better. With revenues over $5B annually, Voltaire employs approximately 5,000 people and is 100% employee owned.

Current State

Voltaire has a varied history regarding innovation. On the one hand, its employees engage in grassroots innovation on their construction projects. On the other hand, employees I interviewed voiced perceived barriers to innovation including a lack of time or prioritization to innovate, rejection of outside ideas, lack of valuation of ideas offered, and red tape in general. Additionally, Voltaire is not considered a particularly innovative company in its marketplace. The construction industry is traditionally risk-averse, and Voltaire's conservative nature leads clients and other prospective partners to expect innovation from the company. When a project team shares an innovative idea with a client, the client may voice surprise that the innovation came from Voltaire.

The Need

With ongoing states of uncertainty and market shifts impacting the construction industry, Voltaire's leadership recognized a need to build up its innovation capabilities. The company's executive leadership named innovation as one of Voltaire's top four imperatives it must master by 2024 to survive and thrive in an ever-changing marketplace. An essential component of this imperative is cultivating a self-sustaining innovation ecosystem that provides a receptive and psychologically safe environment for creativity and innovation to flourish.

The Challenge

Cultivating such an environment within Voltaire will require a mindset shift toward more open, innovative, and entrepreneurial thinking. Past change efforts were grounded in traditional change management approaches, particularly Kotter's (2012) Eight-Stage Change Process. The challenge, then, became: how might one consciously cultivate this innovation ecosystem—which by default requires regular and significant risk-taking—within a well-established and tradition-steeped company within a risk-averse industry?

The Opportunity

In 2020, I was tasked with leading Voltaire's effort to foster a climate of innovation where employees feel free to share their ideas, and they also trust the company would give their ideas due consideration. Selecting me for this role was a bold decision by the Innovation Imperative's leadership which guaranteed that a different level of consciousness and thinking would inform this corporate challenge.

As a change agent, I leverage aspects of my professional, academic, creative, and spiritual being in service to my work. For the last fifteen years I have helped corporations collaborate in creative ways; for twenty years prior to that I worked in nonprofit management. I am a design thinker and creative problem-solver with a penchant for visual facilitation. I am often referred to as the "creative" one on a team. An avid learner, I hold degrees in psychology and nonprofit management. I am currently pursuing my Ph.D. in psychology with a specialization in creativity, innovation, and leadership studies, specifically creativity at work.

I believe that creativity at work is not something one does but something one *is*: each one of us is creative at work. I am an author, collage artist, and general eccentric. As an Edgewalker (Neal, 2006), I know I have a foot in two worlds: the mystic and the mundane. I meditate, reflect daily via my tarot decks, and take nightly sound baths to reset my mind and spirit. I drum and journey to connect with guides and bring insights back in service to my mundane world work. I have touched cosmic consciousness while sitting at a stoplight and know that I am Atman and Brahman all at once, as are we all.

For innovation to become the new norm, Voltaire's leaders would need to recognize that organizational innovation comes from the social creativity of its individuals and teams. Confidence in one's ability to be creative has a tremendous impact on one's creative performance at work (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Cultivate a person's creative self-efficacy, and you cultivate a creative performer. Cultivate a person's consciousness, and you cultivate their creativity. Reaching this change would call for a journey through the soft stuff companies often try to avoid addressing.

The Real Question: Over or Through

My reflexivity led me to make an important choice: shall this innovation ecosystem change effort gloss over the uncomfortable, messy, human aspects to change? Or shall we consciously lead Voltaire's employees through the emotional and psychospiritual journey that is the undeniable foundation of successful change? This choice of over versus through is a fundamental tension I see within corporate change processes at large. Leaders tend to focus on the easy elements such as metrics, processes, or resources, yet it is the values, behaviors, and climate of an organization that sets the course for change and odds for a change effort's success (Rao & Weintraub, 2013). Despite research showing that success in innovation relies upon the latter three factors, corporations shy away from dealing with the "soft stuff" of business. The soft stuff—the very human factors and responses to changes in the system—is the hard stuff for many corporate leaders. Without the soft stuff, however, there *is* no business stuff.

My innovation ecosystem team knew that we were tasked to do something much deeper and more impactful than delivering the next new solution: we were being asked to cultivate a garden. We would not be implementing tools or processes for employees to "be more innovative";

instead, we would be cultivating the deep soil of a cultural ecosystem to create the conditions where employees could choose to be creative at work in the first place (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Our working theory was that, in supporting an employee's ability to choose to be creative at work, the ecosystem would produce ideas that could fuel innovations benefitting Voltaire.

If the current conditions were created or supported by the current culture and change management processes, then we would need to bring a different level of thinking to the opportunity to facilitate a different outcome. Rather than dive headfirst into a solution to be presented to the company, we knew that this initiative would require a tremendous amount of what Voltaire thinks of as *precon*: pre-construction planning and prep-work before a shovel ever goes into the ground. Because of my unique experience, education, philosophy, and position with Voltaire as a change agent, the innovation ecosystem team encouraged me to develop an innovative-to-Voltaire approach to facilitate this ecosystem's emergence.

The Model

The resulting model affirms the value of leading change by going through—rather than glossing over—the messier, more human responses to the psychological journey of transitioning from a known current state to an unknown future state. An emerging work, I currently call this model the TUAI Bridges Model for Facilitating Organizational Transition (TUAI Bridges).

TUAI Bridges draws from aspects of the Bridges Transition Model (Bridges & Bridges, 2016), Theory U (Scharmer, 2018), and Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008), where:

- Theory U serves as the larger container for transformational change,
- Appreciative Inquiry (AI) serves as a complementary implementation strategy, and
- The Bridges Transition Model serves as a reminder of the psychological journey that people experience as they come to terms with a new situation or change.

The Path to the Model

TUAI Bridges came from a place of intuition and emergence. As I sat at my desk, I reflected on the type of change process that might help draw forth the lasting change Voltaire desired (Fig. 11.1).

I then did a short meditation and drew three tarot cards as contemplative objects: The message I received from these cards could not have

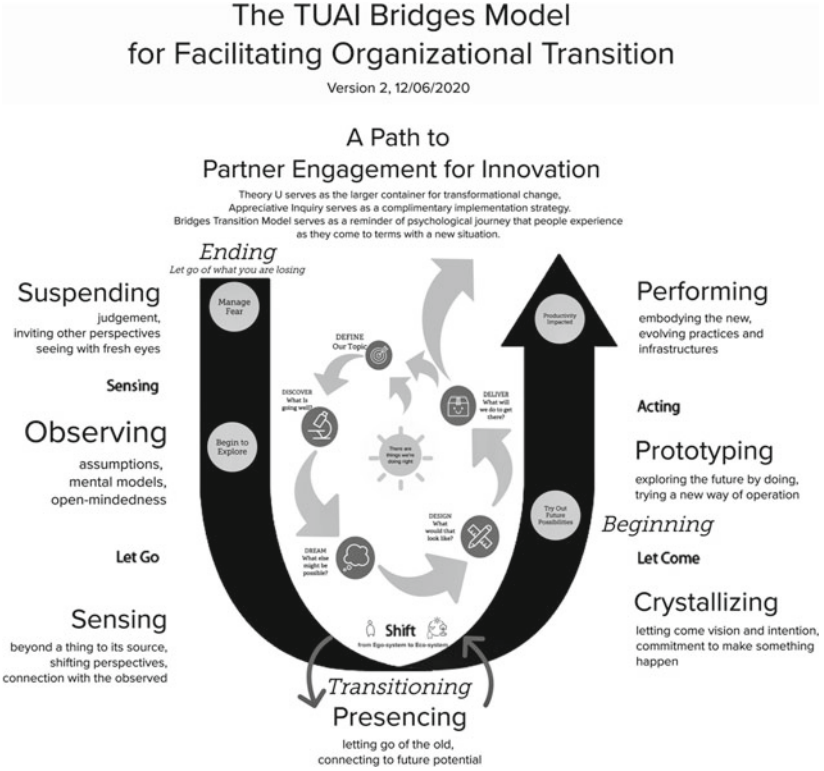


Fig. 11.1 The TUAI Bridges Model for Facilitating Organizational Transition (*Note* This model is intended to serve as a path to partner engagement for innovation. Theory U serves as the larger container for transformational change. Appreciative Inquiry serves as a complimentary implementation strategy. The Bridges Transition Model serves as a reminder of psychological journey that people experience as they come to terms with a new situation)

been more clear: Death (transformation), the Tower (massive change), and the Star (purpose, renewal, spirituality). This journey would require a significant transformation or departure from corporate life as usual, which would shake up established processes built on infirm foundations, leading to clarity of purpose via spiritual insight.

Across from my desk, I saw my copy of Schein's (2004) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. Schein (2004) saw the two parts of organizational culture: the visible culture of how we say we get things done and the invisible culture of how things really get done. If my team was going to change Voltaire's innovation culture, it would take more than tinkering with Voltaire's visible cultural parts; it would require us to enter, explore, and invite the parts of the invisible culture to contribute to the evolution of the new.

I held this while contemplating an old axiom: the only constant is change. Organizational change is a constant, but where was the psychological support for the transition? I thought about how the Bridges Transition Model maps out the psychological journey an organization's members tend to go through when their organization attempts to make a significant change (Bridges & Bridges, 2016). Failure to attend to the phases of this psychological journey can set change management initiatives up for failure. Our journey would not be one of change management but one of facilitating transition. Awareness of—and appreciation for—psychological transition would need to be baked into the process right from the start.

What sort of world view would this shift in approach require of those facilitating the transition journey? What sort of mental container would we need to establish to support the journey's success? Two books over from my copy of Schein sat Scharmer's (2018) *The Essentials of Theory U*. Theory U could bring an awareness-based method for systems change that required a new narrative and mindset for how we perceive, learn, and open to future possibilities. Theory could humanize the process by having us see and remember our humanity (Fig. 11.2).

If I blended Theory U with the Bridges Transition Model to form a psychospiritual container for facilitating Voltaire's transition, what might it contain? My team knew we wanted to honor and build upon the aspects of Voltaire's current culture that supported innovation to cultivate our innovation ecosystem. Appreciative Inquiry (AI) starts from a positive core and spirals out into a process of discovery (of what is), dreaming (of what could be), designing (what will be), and delivering with a sense

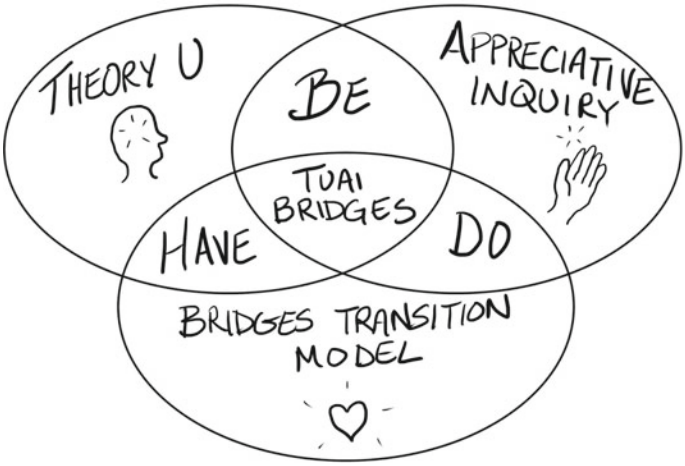


Fig. 11.2 The TUAI Bridges Model as a Visual Synthesis of Head, Hand, and Heart (*Note* Like the quote from von Harbou below, TUAI Bridges seeks to mediate the head [mindset] and hand [Appreciative Inquiry] of organizational change work with a remembrance of the heart [Bridges Transition Model] by facilitating a different level of consciousness and awareness to the interconnection of these three things)

of curiosity and adventure (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Lewis, 2016). I saw how I could easily translate and operationalize the four-phase process into specific Voltaire-friendly engagements, workshops, and opportunities that could serve as delivery systems for the softer and more ephemeral core of our change work.

How It Works

> The mediator between head and hands must be the heart!
> —Thea von Harbou

TUAI Bridges works by (1) raising awareness of the psychological and emotional journey sparked by organizational change, (2) providing leadership with a means for mindset and consciousness cultivation to more readily appreciate and value the importance of that journey, and

(3) facilitating an iterative, emergent, and action-oriented change journey that honors the emotional and psychological transitions of organizational members through their co-creation of the new state.

Open heart: Being human during an organizational transition. Part of the power of the Bridges Transition Model is its awareness and sensitivity to the human beings undergoing a transition journey (Bridges & Bridges, 2016). It also raises awareness that different parts of an organization's membership (referred to here as leaders and followers, for simplicity's sake) traverse these emotional and psychological landscapes at different speeds based on their knowledge, role, and involvement in the change initiative.

TUAI Bridges seeks to make its users conscious of the emotional side of change: remembering that we are human and have human reactions to change and loss that call for a consciousness of the experience and compassion for those who undergo it. Leaders must remember that their knowledge and involvement in the change process position them differently from others on this journey. They must bring sensitivity to their own position on the journey curve and that of their followers, which may be further behind from where they are due to a lack of knowledge or involvement in the change effort. Leader and follower awareness of—and sensitivity to—this human journey serves as the thread that ties the parts of TUAI Bridges together.

Conscious mind(set): Remembering our connection to the changing. Theory U provides a powerful way to examine the overall relationship of visible and invisible systems, as well as our own relationship to the system we might seek to influence or change (Scharmer, 2018). Being a part of the system, a Theory U practitioner relies upon reflexive practices to turn their perception outward then inward to see themselves in the interconnected system. A progressive leadership mindset becomes necessary for doing the work: journeying from open mind to open heart, to open will.

TUAI Bridges seeks to reframe the awareness and mindset of its participants, elevating leadership consciousness if you will. A TUAI Bridges practitioner raises their awareness by opening their mind to acknowledging the psychological and emotional journey that an organization's members experience during change initiatives. From here, the practitioner's heart opens as they empathize with not just the journey experiences and impacts felt by their partners but from their own journey. An opening

of the will follows as practitioners seek to effect change in compassionate ways that minimize psychological and emotional harm to organizational members by being mindful of the journeys each individual is undergoing due to the change effort.

Activated will: Operationalizing the ephemerals of change. Among its many gifts, AI offers a knack for operationalizing the ephemeral while reducing fear of change. Rather than dictating change from the top-down, an Appreciative Inquiry-based approach to change is networked, emergent, collaborative, and co-creative (Cooperrider et al., 2008). At the same time, its 4-D model of discover, dream, design, and destiny (or deliver) provides a practical strategy and approach for facilitating a change journey within an organization.

In this way, Appreciative Inquiry provides TUAI Bridges its action engine and map for meaningful change engagement within an organization. Collaborative and co-creative events for facilitating a change effort may be programmed around the 4-D themes to discover an organization's current state from a place of appreciation instead of judgment. Together, participants dream up what could be for the organization, working together to design possibilities to try, then delivering them to see how they work and learn for the next iteration of solutions.

For most of Voltaire's leadership, TUAI Bridges would not seem to be their intuitive way of being or operating. However, this model holds promise for delivering the type of change Voltaire seeks via its goal of a self-sustaining innovation ecosystem. In order to succeed, we would need to facilitate a shift in mindset from problems to possibilities. We would also need to cultivate an integral-like consciousness and quality of being within the company's core leaders.

The Results (So Far)

Three years into the five-year innovation ecosystem cultivation process, our team has experienced quick wins and setbacks. On the one hand, implementation was slower than anticipated as Voltaire's organizational development staff juggled the needs of five simultaneous change efforts within the company. While the innovation imperative's leadership continues to embrace TUAI Bridges as a change philosophy and approach, a constant tension remains between honoring the spirit of the approach and gravitating toward the "easy" focus areas of innovation: the

processes, resources, and success metrics they can share with Voltaire's executives.

On the other hand, the core innovation team approaches its ecosystem work as a joyful adventure, and other people within Voltaire are noticing. The improved quality of thinking, interactions, engagements, and results is noticeable and infectious. Our change initiative has made much more significant progress relative to the rest, and other change leaders have reached out to us for help inspiring and engaging their efforts. Accordingly, one of my top priorities remains to cultivate my Self in service to this work to model this consciousness and qualities of being with others.

What Wows

The concept. TUAI Bridges was wholeheartedly embraced by the innovation imperative's leadership as its official transition strategy, with approval to launch the model's approach in January 2021. The model also received support and validation from Voltaire's organizational development team; in fact, they were encouraging, declaring the approach to be solid and making sense. The innovation ecosystem concept has spread its roots throughout the company. Our innovation ecosystem partners see the connection and bring the mental model and language forward into their other projects.

The energy. Although working on a high-stakes and critical problem set, our group brings a level of positive energy, enthusiasm, and flat-out delight to our work. We bring a level of self-awareness about our own biases and enthusiasms that helps us be more mindful when working with our corporate partners who may be more reluctant to dive in the way we are willing to.

The progress. In a surprisingly short time, the innovation ecosystem team developed a solid plan and achieved buy-in from leadership and key stakeholders. Most importantly, the team nurtured three influential leaderships mindsets: those of open mind (to the model), open heart (to the psychospiritual journey inherent in corporate change), and open will (embodying the change we seek, even as we create it) within

our core team. Because of the innovation imperative team's strides in affecting culture and mindset, Voltaire decided to formalize innovation as an official corporate function (much like human resources or organizational development), with dedicated resources in place for a 2022 first-quarter launch. This new corporate function used the TUAI Bridges as its strategic map for educating and communicating with Voltaire's partners on innovation moving forward.

The traction. The TUAI Bridges model arose from an internal need for the Innovation Imperative. As word of the model spread, so has an interest in applying the model to other change efforts both within and external to Voltaire. People beyond the innovation imperative are leveraging TUAI Bridges principles to facilitate transformations of service philosophies, social justice movements, and even Lean/Six-Sigma processes.

What Wobbles

The Focus. An ongoing tension exists between cultivating the deeper soil of the ecosystem with a company's desire for quick wins and painless processes. I have focused on prioritizing employees' psychospiritual and emotional journeys in the face of change in the eyes of the innovation imperative's leadership. In an environment where leaders' day jobs require direct action and tangible results, someone must become the champion of the intangible and the indirect lying at the heart of the success of this innovation ecosystem. Without such focus, the ecosystem's soil risks loss of its nutrients, starvation of its root system, and the ecosystem's failure to thrive.

My Strength. This level of emotional change work within an organization can become exhausting when one is not diligent in taking care of oneself. While my partners support self-care, other needs within the organization sometimes make it challenging to keep the appropriate boundaries in place for me to give myself the quality of spiritual and mental spaciousness I need during my day. I also became a key part of the new corporate innovation function and designed my new position in ways that supported my best work and self-care needs.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Facilitating this organizational transition draws upon both art and science, with greater emphasis on the former. Through TUAI Bridges, the innovation ecosystem team seeks to facilitate a practical change effort resulting in a change in consciousness of Voltaire's leadership and staff. Facilitating a change in organizational consciousness may provoke strong reactions in employees. The key, then, is to approach this change differently and cultivate an elevated consciousness ecosystem. To the leaders and managers who may be interested in applying this model within their organizations as a means of elevating consciousness where they are, I offer the following practical advice:

The Change Starts with You

How you show up as a person for this work gives tacit permission for others to do the same. Before seeking to amplify the consciousness of those within an organization, amplify your own. Establish (or continue) a regular practice that supports your ability to connect with a consciousness larger than your own and be reflexive toward your values, beliefs, assumptions, behaviors, and the climate you create with and for others.

Consistently Embody Your Practice

Just as it is more beneficial to meditate consistently for five minutes each day than to meditate for one hour a month, it is more beneficial within the corporate setting to cultivate your consciousness and internal qualities of being more than once a day. As Thich Nhat Hanh (1975) once noted, every moment is an opportunity to practice anew. To maintain the quality of presence required for facilitating this level of organizational change, I do not just meditate once in the morning and consider myself good for the rest of the day: I design my workday to include myriad mundane reminders (e.g., email notifications, calendar reminders, audio/visual cues) to return to my true self. I began this practice by taking three breaths before a meeting and whenever I needed it. Over the decades, my practice has expanded and diversified to meet my needs at any given moment. For you, find the thing that you can do consistently for a few moments each day, then build from there.

Serve a Fantastic Pie

You can engage in consciousness-elevating practices without overtly naming them if you find yourself in an organizational environment that would not receive such concepts well. I call this my "come for the food, stay for the pie" approach. An old advertising slogan in the United States, the concept invited people to come to a restaurant to meet a basic need (the food) while meeting a delicious need they did not realize they may have had (the pie). When I facilitate culture and consciousness change, people come for the practical business results they seek (the food). They *stay* and *come back* for how it makes them feel (the pie). Consider your consciousness and psychospiritual approaches the secret spices in your pie.

Pack Away Your Robes and Wear the Jeans

Jack Kornfield (2001) tells a story about visiting his parents in America after spending years in India as a Buddhist monk. His visit was painfully awkward for both he and his parents until he took off his monk's robes, let go of how enlightened he was supposed to be, put on some jeans, and simply spent time with his family. It can be tempting to wear our own proverbial robes as we engage in change work that seeks to elevate consciousness. Instead, embrace the language and traditions of your organization as you work to raise corporate consciousness. At Voltaire, I start each meeting with the company's tradition of sharing a "safety moment." My safety moment always focuses on elevating consciousness, although I would not use that language with my meeting's attendees. Instead, I frame our moments of breathing or meditation as opportunities to arrive in this place after all our back-to-back video meetings.

Embrace the Play, Joy, and Flat-Out Delight of This Living Process

Our innovation ecosystem team's interactions are infused with a bold sense of child-like curiosity, wonder, and adventure. Even our virtual collaboration spaces embody this spirit as we lean into the creative possibilities of MURAL for our meetings and keep the canvases live in a constant state of iteration and evolution. We also find reasons to celebrate every step of the way and often communicate via memes and gifs. The team is making serious progress while having serious fun, and our change journey is immensely fulfilling as a result.

Cultivate the Deep Soil for Loving Growth

When I presented this paper at the 2021 Conscious Leadership and Management conference, Dr. Sunita Singh Sengupta said something that burned itself into my brain: *"The journey is inward for external excellence"* (Personal communication with S. S. Sengupta, May, 2021). Sengupta's words speak to what the TUAI Bridges model is ultimately seeking to facilitate: flourishing business through flourishing human beings through an understanding of the self, the elevation of one's consciousness, and remembrance of our interconnection. While principles of social harmony, glorious imperfection, inherent goodness, and spiritual ecology are at play within the TUAI Bridges model, the ultimate principle at play here is love. Love is the soil where people can grow and thrive. When our people grow and thrive, businesses grow and thrive, achieving not just their business goals but meaningful and powerful contributions to their societies.

Conclusion

> Change is disturbing when it is done to us, exhilarating when it is done by us.
>
> —Rosabeth Moss Kanter

This chapter shared how organizational creativity and innovation are essential yet tricky to achieve in established, tradition-bound organizations. Through the unique opportunity of being tasked with cultivating an innovation ecosystem at just such a company and bringing a different level of consciousness, intuition, and insight to bear to the problem, the TUAI Bridges Model for Facilitating Organizational Transition was born.

Three years into its implementation, we have experienced surprising successes and challenges. Possibilities continue to abound for the evolution of this model as it iterates and evolves in real-time with the project. What will happen as Voltaire's leadership becomes increasingly empathic and compassionate toward the underlying psychological and emotional journeys accompanying change, rather than shying away from or glossing over those uncomfortable truths? What will happen as Voltaire's core innovation partners become more comfortable incorporating breathing, centering, mindfulness, and reflexivity into their practices? How will

increasing numbers of Voltaire's partners respond to invitations to cultivate this emerging innovation ecosystem together? We have two more years to find out! May those years be more exhilarating than disturbing for us all.

References

Anderson, N., Potočnik, K., & Zhou, J. (2014). Innovation and creativity in organizations: A state-of-the-science review, prospective commentary, and guiding framework. *Journal of Management, 40*(5), 1297–1333.

Bridges, W., & Bridges, S. (2016). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change* (4th ed.). Da Capo Lifelong, a Member of the Perseus Books Group.

Christensen, B. T. (2020). Incubation. In S. Pritzker & M. Runco (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of creativity* (3rd ed., pp. 642–647). Academic Press.

Cooperrider, D. L., Whitney, D. K., & Stavros, J. M. (2008). *Appreciative inquiry handbook: For leaders of change* (2nd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Cropley, A. (2020). Definitions of creativity. In S. Pritzker & M. Runco (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of creativity* (3rd ed., pp. 315–322). Academic Press.

DeNisi, A., & Murphy, K. (2020). Series editors' foreword. In M. D. Mumford & E. M. Todd (Eds.), *Creativity and innovation in organizations* (p. xvii). Routledge.

Falck, H. S., & Barnes, R. E. (1975). The change agent in the organization. *Administration in Mental Health, 3*, 3–11.

Hanh, T. N. (1975). *The miracle of mindfulness: An introduction to the practice of meditation*. Beacon Press.

Hughes, M. (2011). Do 70 per cent of all organizational change initiatives really fail? *Journal of Change Management, 11*(4), 451–464.

Kačerauskas, T. (2020). Sociology. In S. Pritzker & M. Runco (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of creativity* (3rd ed., pp. 495–499). Academic Press.

Kornfield, J. (2001). *After the ecstasy, the laundry: How the heart grows wise on the spiritual path*. Bantam Books.

Kotter, J. P. (2012). *Leading change*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Krippner, S. (2020). Altered and transitional states. In S. Pritzker & M. Runco (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of creativity* (3rd ed., pp. 29–36). Academic Press.

Kuratko, D. F., Covin, J. G., & Hornsby, J. S. (2014). Why implementing corporate innovation is so difficult. *Business Horizons, 57*(5), 647–655.

Lewis, S. (2016). *Positive psychology and change: How leadership, collaboration, and appreciative inquiry create transformational results*. Wiley.

Maheshwari, A. K., Orme-Johnson, D., & Travis, F. (2023, in press). Consciousness and creativity: Accessing the source within. In A. Maheshwari (Ed.),

Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural approaches to oneness and flourishing (Vol. 2). Palgrave Macmillan.

Mumford, M. D., & Todd, E. M. (2020). Creativity and innovation at work. In M. D. Mumford & E. M. Todd (Eds.), *Creativity and innovation in organizations* (1st ed., pp. 1–16). Routledge.

Neal, J. (2006). *Edgewalkers: People and organizations that take risks, build bridges, and break new ground*. Praeger.

Rao, J., & Weintraub, J. (2013). How innovative is your company's culture? *MIT Sloan Management Review, 54*(3), 29–37.

Reiter-Palmon, R., Mumford, M. D., & Threlfall, K. V. (1998). Solving everyday problems creatively: The role of problem construction and personality type. *Creativity Research Journal, 11*(3), 187–197.

Rhodes, J. M. (1961). Analysis of creativity. *Phi Delta Kappan, 42*, 305–310.

Richards, R., & Goslin-Jones, T. (2018). Mysteries of creative process: Explorations at work and in daily life. In L. Martin & N. Wilson (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of creativity at work* (pp. 71–106). Springer International Publishing AG.

Scharmer, C. O. (2018). *The essentials of Theory U*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Schein, E. H. (2004). *Organizational culture and leadership* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Schein, E. H., & Schein, P. A. (2018). *Humble leadership*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Tierney, P., & Farmer, S. M. (2002). Creative self-efficacy: Its potential antecedents and relationship to creative performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 45*(6), 1137–1148.

Toomey, M., & Neal, J. (2021). *Integrating change: The art, the science and the craft of transforming organizations*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Wallas, G. (1926). *The art of thought* (1st ed.). Jonathan Cape.

CHAPTER 12

How People Maneuver Through Work, Life, and the Self to Find Spaces for Life Meaning

Ángel López Mutuberría

Introduction

> Man cannot stand a meaningless life
> —Carl Jung (1959, BBC's Face to Face)

Despite unprecedented levels of material wealth, people are increasingly alienated from their work (Pirson, 2017). Apart from the obvious functional benefits, clear deployment of a relieving sense of security, status symbolism, and the expiation of our anxieties and insecurities, materialism reduces clarity about oneself (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014) and blurs the answer to the question: *Who am I?* Often, just when our unconscious fear of death turns into a conscious awareness of our mortality is when we revisit our life goals, motivations, and behaviors (Solomon et al., 2015).

Á. López Mutuberría (✉)
Pamplona, Spain
e-mail: aml265@case.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_12

It is in the transition from the winter of discontent or impending loss where humans awake, now in a more conscious state, asking: *How do I know I am living the life I was meant to live?*

In times of paradigmatic change (overpopulation, destruction of our own life support system, incapacity to provide security and material well-being for part of the world population), the dominant model of business realizes that it has to change toward a more humanistic approach to management. When human dignity champions management practices, it might well be that companies recognize that well before competent professionals, businesses need to have, above all, grounded human beings. Searching for our true human nature requires, in many instances, to have access to professionals and leaders with the skill sets of the coach, shaman, or therapist (Kets de Vries, 2016). The three—coach, shaman, and therapist—are enlightened practitioners, who know how to get into the true-self, helping the constant reconstruction of our psyche, helping to trace the answers to the questions: *Who am I? How do I know I am living the life I am meant to live?*

The web of reasons where we people find meaning is as complex as the palette of human behavior and is influenced by personality, life experiences, and social influences. Ultimately, all those elements are the dominant forces behind the fundamental impact on well-being and life satisfaction. The times when mental health is equal to the absence of illness are behind. Meaning and purposeful life are traits behind positive mental health (Lambert et al., 2010).

Who dares to judge someone because she enjoys living in a world of materialism or transcendentalism, having a narcissistic personality, or a generous soul if it brings lasting well-being and does not harm others? Only when the continuum going from alienation to well-being produces psychological distress that prevents us from living the life we were meant to live is when we need to stop and breathe, think, and react. As managers, as professionals, as parents, and as sons or daughters, we have a responsibility toward mapping where we are in that continuum for us and for others. We have a shared responsibility toward society by helping others find who they indeed are. Only by identifying that place in the continuum, that sweet spot that might bring sense in our living and the lives of others, do we recognize and exploit the chance of becoming as close as possible to fulfillment through enjoyment or adversity, whatever our life circumstances are.

This study seeks to understand and map the locations where people build meaning over life from the multidimensional nature of the human being (body/mind/spirit). In identifying those areas, we may better appreciate our true-self and understand other people better at work, in a family, or within any social environment. As social beings, we propose that we need to have the skill set that enables us to identify the space where people discover their true-self. The identification of that space will help to manage the levers where humans excel and flourish. The continuum between alienation and well-being in life, and in particular, in the workplace, led to examining a wicked problem of practice that raises the following research question: *How do human beings maneuver along the web of life meaning to create well-being*?

Literature Review

The literature review will guide us through: what life meaning is; how the complexity of the cognitive processes (the psyche) has the capacity to influence what we see and how to interpret it; how beyond the mind, spirit adds a new dimension to the cosmology of the human being; how the discovery of our true-self gets us closer to who we truly are; and how in a business environment, management, and human resources approach the multidimensionality of the human being.

Life Meaning

Reker and Chamberlain (2000) refer to the construct of meaning by two different but interrelated dimensions. Implicit or definitional meaning is defined as "the attachment of personal significance to objects or events in life," while existential meaning or meaningfulness is defined as "the attempts to understand how events in life fit into a larger context" (Reker & Chamberlain, 2000). This study considers meaning as a continuum of live events through a time span that changes fueled by stages of personal evolution traversing childhood, adolescence, adulthood (midlife, mature, and late adulthood), and death and dying. Additionally, the study considers as well how people attach meaning to experiences, situations, events, or objects in life.

Research has shown that existential meaning is essential in relation to job satisfaction among the aged (Lee et al., 2017), how work contributes to meaning (Ward & King, 2017), how meaning is essential in well-being

considerations (García-Alandete, 2015), how meaning helps dealing with loss (Boyraz et al., 2015), or with the hardship of life (Trzebiński et al., 2020).

Ego and Soul

Hulnick (2010) refers to how the Oxford English Dictionary defines psychology as "The study or consideration of the soul or spirit" (Simpson et al., 1989), where psyche stands for the soul. From its original meaning, psychology evolves into the study of the dynamism of personality (Hulnick & Hulnick, 2010), most likely due to philosophers in the early days such as Kant, who denied at a time the scientific status of psychology due to the difficulty of empiricism, lack of mathematical descriptions, and lack of objectivity. Recent studies have transformed Kant's criticisms into a more constructive vision of psychology as the science of human beings (Kraus, 2018). But still, where did psychology lose in its definition the component of the "soul or spirit" in favor of personality?

Traditional psychology has focused on the study of the relationships between the conscious and unconscious states of the ego, mind, and body as it conforms human behavior and personality through psychoanalysis, behaviorism, or humanism, to mention some of the lines of thought and practice. For these forces of psychology, there is no such thing as a soul or eternal self. The first three forces of psychology focus on a conventional cognitive map where mental processes encompass the ego, mind, and body.

Since Jung first mentioned the concept of transpersonal unconsciousness, consciousness and spirituality are the pillars where transpersonal psychology builds the foundation for personal transformation in what is known as the fourth discipline in psychology (Strohl, 1998). Sutich first defined transpersonal psychology in 1968. Since then, transpersonal psychology has been a holistic beyond-the-ego psychology (Friedman & Hartelius, 2013).

Past lives therapy, hypnosis, and regression into past lives have been around for many thousand years (Marriott, 1984). Dr. Ian Stevenson, a psychiatrist, studied children who claim to remember previous lives (Stevenson, 2001), giving a fascinating account of the transcultural topic of reincarnation (Bernet & Thomas, 2002). Brian Weiss, M.D., a psychiatrist as well, also documented hundreds of cases where tapping into what

Jung would call the unconsciousness (current life experiences deepen into the unconscious) and the subconsciousness (beyond current life experiences going into other lives) documents past life memories (Weiss, 1988).

Through regression to past lives, reincarnation is suggested, and the self now is constrained by time, dimension, space, and current reality in a conscious or unconscious deposit of current life experiences. A multilevel framework integrates the multidimensionality of the human being. A new consideration into immortality gives life meaning to some people since it goes beyond the background of this life, moving into the engraved experience of an immortal spirit.

Emerging Transcendentalism and Spiritualism

There is an intersection of psychology and spirituality since the latter contextualizes and explains behavior. Only when either one biases us are we missing the holistic view of the human being in all its potential. The blending of spirituality and psychology was already advanced by Jung, Merton, Kunkel, and Frankl (Haynes, 2016).

Spiritualism doesn't mean religion but is inclusive of all possible religious traditions. Some people feel a more prosperous inner life and a greater sense of inner peace when actively involved in a particular faith or a particular spiritual community (Neal, 2013). Representative religions operationalized the connection between the search for the true-self, loyalty to the self, and a final and rewarding destination where one will find peace and happiness. Examples include Buddhist enlightenment principles, Protestant personal identity, purpose, and meaning from work, Jewish holiness of work, Islamic wholeness of the human being, Bahá'ís self and purpose of work, Hindu's road to being, awareness, and liberation, or Taoism synchronization. Shamanism and other forms of spiritualist expression share with psychology and coaching a universal quest for searching one's true-self through different routes of awareness into a broader consciousness. There is a confluence of similarities between the healing practices of shamans and the work of therapists and executive coaches (Kets de Vries, 2016). While shamans are involved in "soul-retrieval," many executive coaches and psychotherapists start with finding or bringing back the true-self, even for some, the voice of the soul. In the end, all of them are concerned with the human (well) being.

Spirituality turns human beings toward a deeper connection with the universe, and one's true-self as a way to find: (a) one's balance; (b) a more profound and more conscious sense of oneself; (c) a consistent life with values; (d) a proper awareness of who one is and what life means; and (e) a tool for a more consistent life and, by default, a state of well-being. Although words like "faith" and "spiritual" have negative connotations for many organizational leaders (Neal, 2013), new theories, such as Fry's causal theory of spiritual leadership, have been developed. In addition to building on identity and values, theories of workplace spirituality incorporate calling and membership to its constitution (Fry, 2003).

True-Self

The human species finds the roadmap for its existence through the process of individuation, where a person discovers the true-self (Stevenson, 2001). The true-self is moral, is good, is perspective-independent, and cross-culturally stable (Strohminger et al., 2017). The true-self overarches the means and congruence for personal and social balance to fulfill the *esse in anima* (being in soul, spirit, center court), achieving well-being.

There is an existential problem when we do not know who we are, do not recognize, or do not see ourselves in our current lives. There is an existential dilemma when we acknowledge how successful we are but how empty we feel deep inside. Or when we recognize how extremely bright we are but emotionally crippled. Or when we realize that although very loving, our life is chaos. Or when we are solid in one or many aspects of our lives but somehow lopsided. We do not find a balance because we cannot find clarity. We feel crippled because we have not seen our becoming, our potential, our wholeness, our purpose. Life is about learning, about lessons learned, about using our own experience to serve the purposes of what it rests ahead with the aim and intention to become the best possible version of our true-self. Finding your true-self is a journey plagued with the discoveries and experiences along the way that ideally will shape the identity and will help to discover our calling, our becoming, our purpose. Our becoming is then our purpose, and our purpose is to become.

Personal Calling

Even when the concept of calling might sound mystical (Elangovan et al., 2010), it is critical to human motivation, the development of our identity,

and connection to our work and well-being. Personal calling enlightens intrinsic values.

When we are living our true-self, personal calling, and values contribute to building our identities and enlighten the road for action in our lives, including our work environment, then one might think that we are living the life we meant to live.

Work can be conceived as a *calling* for some people and is implicit in Jung's theory of the self (Bogart, 1995), matching the need to transcend workplace responsibilities and satisfy spiritual needs. In addition to building on identity and values, theories of workplace spirituality incorporate calling and membership to its constitution (Fry, 2003).

Many religions, philosophers, and cultures incorporate personal calling or vocation, going from religious to secular explanations. The Indian concept of dharma refers to man's mandated social role (Bogart, 1994). The Calvinist idea of earthly occupations holds spiritual significance (Dik et al., 2019). The Christian teachings of career choice, or the Buddhist concept of "right livelihood" are others. Among the various ways to understand personal calling, from religious to secular definitions, three aspects remain constant (Elangovan et al., 2010): an orientation toward action, a sense of clarity of purpose and personal mission, and pro-social intentions.

Research by Markow and Klenke (2005) proved empirically that there is a relationship between personal meaning, calling, and organizational commitment. In the context of spiritual leadership, they identified a positive correlation between self-transcendent personal meaning and calling (Markow & Klenke, 2005). Moreover, proper development of calling or personal purpose correlates to life satisfaction through a more positive sense of self (Torrey & Duffy, 2012).

Human Resources and the Multidimensionality of the Human Being

We are living in times of paradigmatic change where the traditional and dominant model of business is shifting toward a more humanistic approach. In this new stage of human consciousness, dignity, respect, and a holistic approach to the individual champions human resources practices (Laloux, 2014). Employees are demanding not only dignity but an appreciation of the differences between individuals, recognition for a holistic

approach to the management of individuals, satisfaction for the opportunity to develop the self, and fulfillment of a personal calling. Research shows how values influence decision-making (McGuire et al., 2006). Self-direction and personal values are essential elements of meaning (Hall et al., 2018).

As psychology moved from the study of the soul to the study of personality, human resources also absorbed its roots from the psychology of the character. Traditional human resource management has assumed human behavior is predictable, causal, and manageable. Human resource theories do not often capture the complexity and holistic nature of the human being (Kuchinke, 2013). Consequently, HR systems have been built on a linear causality and epistemology (Bechtel Jayanti, 2011) and suffer, such as classical science, from determinism, the principle of reduction and disjunction (Morin, 2007), sometimes considering individuals as tools or resources. Without disregarding the importance of individual variables of cognition per se (soul, ego, mind, the construction of the self, or the significance of the social environment), perhaps individuals can be evaluated from a more dynamic and holistic eco-system of variables where nonlinear interactions allow us to assess the uniqueness of every human being.

Meaning and purpose in the workplace can light up organizations (Ulrich, 2011), and HR becomes handy and critical in their delivery. Different generations, such as millennials and generation Ys, expect a higher integration between meaningful work and work–life balance (Chalofsky et al., 2013).

Human agency is not traditionally considered in human resources, where the individual is just constrained by the framework of the industry, company, role, and work responsibilities. But expressions of the human agency include meaning and spirituality as part of the development of the individual (Kuchinke, 2013).

Research Design

Methodology

The current research employed a second-generation qualitative grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to examine the impact of life meaning. Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory has a "discernable thread of constructivism in their approach to

inquiry" (Mills et al., 2006) similar to Blumer's symbolic interactionism when evaluating how meaning arises from social interaction and the interpretative process of interviewers in dealing with life meaning (Blumer, 2009).

The research collects and analyzes data through theoretical exploration allowing for the emergence of findings of the social experience (Charmaz, 2014). Thus, ultimately the idea of the constructivist grounded theory is what will enable us to assign meaning to our findings and build on the a priori knowledge of this topic from our collective experiences.

Data has been gathered through semi-structured interviews designed with open questions and probes so that professionals have a chance to discuss openly. The discussions have been designed to pull out the reasons between the variables of life meaning, feelings of emptiness or alienation, personal calling, values, and potential relationships with well-being.

The research has been conducted among HR professionals in the context where there is no professional level or professional category differentiation (professionals, managers, directors, or executives), for-profit organizations, of different industries such as renewable energies, cosmetics, consulting, pharmaceutical, manufacturing, food, surface materials, consumer discretionary industry, software development, and chemicals. Interviews have been conducted in various geographies (Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, France, China, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Mexico, and the USA) in either Spanish or English.

Sample

A range of forty-one professionals has been interviewed either face-to-face or through video conference until theoretical saturation has been reached. Saturation is usually explained when the development of new concepts regarding properties (dimensional variation) is not emerging anymore (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

To attain diversity in the sample, we conducted 41 semi-structured interviews. Sixteen are women (39%), and 21 are men (61%), all working in the human resources department of different industries. Most interviewees were between 40 and 60 years old. There were different professional levels represented, such as employees, managers, directors, and vice presidents in different countries around the world. The research protocol was approved by a University Institutional Review Board (IRB) concerned

Table 12.1 Sample distribution (participants and percentage)

Gender		
• Female	16	39%
• Male	21	61%
Age Range		
• 20–30	2	5%
• 31–40	9	22%
• 41–50	12	29%
• 51–60	17	41%
• 61–above	1	2%
Civil Status		
• Married	32	78.0%
• Single	7	17.1%
• Divorced	2	4.9%
Location		
• Asia (China, and Singapore)	2	4.9%
• America (Uruguay, Mexico, and the USA)	5	12.2%
• Europe (Spain, Germany, France, Belgium, and Switzerland)	32	78.0%
• Middle East (United Arab Emirates)	1	2.4%
Level within the Company		
Vice President	3	7%
Director	18	44%
Manager	17	41%
Professional	3	7%

with the protection of human subjects in research. Interviews were anonymous and tracked through a nine-digit identifier. Table 12.1 shows more details of the sample.

Data Collection

The first analytic turn takes us to code (Saldaña, 2016). Interviews were coded manually using an open coding approach, and then electronically, utilizing NVivo software version 12. Focused and axial coding was used to identify the frequency of common themes.

The original interview protocol also evolved from the original version into what was approved by the IRB, influenced by the willingness to analyze the multidimensionality of the human being and how HR professionals (sample) approached it (Table 12.2).

Table 12.2 The original and approved interview protocol

The original base interview protocol	**Approved interview protocol by IRB**
1. What makes you get up every day?	1. What makes you get up every day?
2. What makes you feel energized?	2. What makes you feel energized?
3. Tell me about a time when your life was meaningful when you thought you lived the life you were meant to live	3. Tell me about a time when your life was meaningful
4. Tell me about a time when you had feelings of emptiness or alienation	4. Tell me about a time when you thought you lived the life you were meant to live
5. Tell me about a time when you didn't live by your values	5. Tell me about a time when you had feelings of emptiness or alienation
6. Tell me about a time when you were living by your values	6. Tell me about a time when you didn't live by your values
7. Tell me about a time when you felt peace and well-being	7.Tell me about a time when you were living by your values
	8. Tell me about a time when you felt peace and well-being
Possible Probes	Possible Probes
a. "What led up to it?"	a. "What led up to it?"
b. "What were you thinking or feeling?"	b. "What were you thinking or feeling?"
c. "What did you say or do?"	c. "What did you say or do?"
d. In response to any of the above, when they are not clear: "That is interesting, can be more specific?"	d. In response to any of the above, when they are not clear: "That is interesting, can you be more specific?"
	e. If the participant focuses on just either work/life, then the researcher asks the same question centering the conversation into the other dimension
	Additional questions after a brief explanation of the research:
	1. How important is having a life calling/vocation/purpose for an HR professional?
	2. How important is to be authentic to yourself as an HR professional? (Authenticity is defined as being aware of your thoughts and acting accordingly)
	3. How important is to live by your intrinsic (personal) values for an HR professional?
	4. Is there any person in history you admire for his calling (vocation), authenticity, and values?

Findings

Instead of thinking regarding the dichotomy work–life where much has been discussed, this study proposes to take a more holistic approach to a human being where other dimensions such as the development of the self or a family component should be taken into account. In particular, work, the self, and family become pivotal in life meaning, letting work as an instrumental or mean to accomplish life meaning. It does not contemplate then work or life as a fight of opposites but work and life (meaning) as a symbiosis where a rotational triangle with three axes: family, work, and self rotates based on personal circumstances and stages of personal evolution.

Participants were asked questions about moments in their lives that made them get up, energized them, or made their lives meaningful or alienated, among other subjects. For the majority, their answers elicited their fundamental life needs and the foundations for life meaning in a triumvirate of three different axes:

1. The construction and development of the self;
2. Meaningful work; and
3. Positive social relationships, mainly in a family context but friends were mentioned too.

These three pillars are immersed in the particular life stage of development for every participant and a particular identity for everyone interviewed, making every participant unique, unrepeatable, varnished by their set of circumstances and life experiences, in a nutshell, conforming their reality, and getting sense out it.

People find balance in their lives when the multidimensional human being fits into a balanced life structure composed of the self, family, and work.

Finding 1: The Triumvirate of Life Meaning, Balance, and Well-Being: Self, Family, and Work

The analysis of the codes led us to how people find life meaning in the interaction of three different axes: work, the self, and family (Finding 1). "Symbolic interactionism" is built when people find meaning that leads toward actions based on their interpretation of things and the interpretation of the social interactions (Blumer, 2009). Work, the self, and family

become drivers and energizers for daily motivation and are life lighthouses for congruence and action. When the axes are balanced well-being is likely to occur, but when there is a tension not resolved, alienation tends to be present. People interact along the axes to find meaning, balance, and well-being attributing meaning to each of them.

All respondents made references about the balance of a triumvirate composed of family, life, and work as the foundation for life meaning. Following are some quotes:

> I think I have to give thanks because I have a job, I have a family, I have friends, I realize that I have everything. That encourages me, my life. (180605_0938)

> Everything makes sense in my life… beyond just my professional life. That would enclose my whole life. My family, my work, my health, so it would be a moment combining those three. (180529_1136)

Finding 2: Identity, the Self, and Development of Self Opportunity

People build the true-self rooting its construction on ego, mind, and spirit influenced by conscious and unconscious decisions, values, beliefs, and motivations, varnished by the subtle influence of the subconsciousness, at a particular stage of life development. Participants expressed who they are through their stories, their traumas, their life experiences, their personalities, hopes, and ambitions, and their circumstances. Alienation would pop up when there are no opportunities to build the self or when the tension of choices between family, work, and the development of the self is not correctly balanced.

> Yes, there was a time when I worked at a multinational. I had a good salary, a good position but I felt absolutely empty. I felt that I was in the place where I did not want to be, that I was far from my environment, and so on that the kind of life I was leading did not help me to be better as a person nor to develop as a person and not even as a professional. (181613_1840)

> I was hijacked by the position and salary in this company. I was having such a high dose of dopamine that I was completely immersed in the superficiality of my life and forgot who I truly was. I completely lost contact with my true-self. (180820_0730)

Finding 3: Work as Life Meaning

Again, the triangle—self, family, and work—reflects how people can use work as a source of meaning that, integrated with opportunities to develop the self, ends up in high levels of well-being. Work content, intrinsic motivation, or work relationships, are among other attributes, clear dimensions helping build the cosmology of life meaning through the work environment. As per work in general or work content is concerned:

> I believe that to feel fulfilled, your work does not have to be work, it has to be a hobby. You have to align your work with something that fills you, that you enjoy the time you invest, that it is not an obligation, that it is an enjoyment. That for me is very important for a job, the feeling of realization. (180612_1504)

Finding 4: Family

The integrity of the three axes, family, self, and work, constitute a fundamental finding for life meaning and well-being. Family by itself is critical as well, as it enhances or threatens the equilibrium of relationship, and is corroborated by all the participants in the research:

> Has there been a moment in your life, I am referring to the whole vital area when you felt that everything was meaningful? Yes. Would you tell me more? When I got pregnant with my first child. (180522_2205)

Finding 5: Human Resources

The study presented the opportunity to research opinions about what specifically human resource professionals think about the questions presented, what they value, and how they see the profession itself.

For the human resources practitioner, the human resource function gives meaning to many of their professionals, mainly due to the human nature of the responsibility and the intermediary between management and employees. There is no such an HR profession without loyalty to values and authenticity to the self.

> HR is about the wellbeing of individuals or the growth of individuals, and the teams, is really one of the things I'm kind of core to what engages me and motivates me. (180613_1053)

> What really engages me is my capability, ability, potential to positively impact others, that helps them to realize their potential, their aspirations, in a more effective, more efficient way, or even I help to identify that for them. (180613_1053)

Discussion

Below the level of the problem situation about which the individual is complaining—behind the trouble with studies, or wife, or employer, or with his own uncontrollable or bizarre behavior, or with his frightening feelings, lies one central search. It seems to me that at the bottom, each person is asking: *Who am I, really? How can I get in touch with this real self, underlying all my surface behavior? How can I become myself?* (Rogers, 1956). This study was born with the intention to shed light on human behavior and life drivers by understanding and mapping the locations where human beings find meaning over life in contemplation of our multidimensional human nature (body/mind/spirit). The research question: *How do human beings maneuver along the web of life meaning to create well-being?* had the intention to explore where people find meaning, producing either well-being or alienation so that we can design tools and interventions to properly frame our uniqueness in a daily context.

Intrinsic motivation enhances the construction of the self, and is associated with well-being and lasting change (Flannery, 2017). Self-determination theory states that most people show commitment to their lives (Ryan & Deci, 2000). People in the study manifested how intrinsic motivation leads to the definition of the self as a sign of agency pointing toward well-being in the confluence of the self at work. The intention of the research was to better appreciate our true-self and understand us, human beings, while we interact with ourselves and with other people, specifically in a work environment. The study aimed to discover what are the leavers that make us accept ourselves better, accept life as it comes, and frame, and contextualize life events. Percy (2000) referred to how we frame our reality in our own constructed world of assumptions and

symbolism. We live in our built-in frame of reality. So, broadening our life vision, mapping those sweet spots, and identifying those levers allow us to identify and access the tools to reach well-being within our current life experience and reality.

The true-self builds "life philosophies" (Hicks & Routledge, 2013), informing choices in family, self, and work. We have seen how people build their identities based on life stages of personal evolution and life experiences. By identifying those dimensions, we allow creating spaces for intervention personally and professionally.

We tend to concentrate with intensity across life on one or various aspect of (a) our self driven by exercise, spirituality, pleasure, materialism, or other physical or spiritual areas; (b) our job responsibilities trapping us by a world of rewards, compensation, promotions, reputation, ambition, or possibilities; and (c) our family, sometimes dedicated to home responsibilities at the expense of neglecting one or more areas. But chances for abundance and equilibrium happen when we can combine not one or the other but the three.

We acknowledge that our current times of paradigmatic change and interconnectivity doesn't allow us time for ourselves. But most importantly, we might not have a desire to stop and think because we are afraid of what our true-self would say if we would be alone. As one interviewee told me, "I am happy with my superficiality. That's the space I have chosen to live. There is where I find myself comfortable. Without thinking of anything else. Questioning nothing."

Sadly, it is when we acknowledge our mortality or when we suffer from a terrible illness that we realize that there might be more than what we have experienced in life. It is then that we might remember the dreams we had when we were kids that did ot materialize. It is when fate, luck, or destiny results in a handy determinist explanation. But as Hillman mentions, "each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived" (Hillman, 1996, p. 6) suggesting personal calling. So, let's live and make the most of our calling.

I studied professionals in the field of human resources at different professional levels in different countries. Questions elucidated answers about well-being and how people find balance in life. One of the critical discoveries has been how people find balance when three different components achieve equilibrium: The self, family, and work. People create a cosmology through the structures of those three axes to maneuver and create meaning.

Our prejudice undoubtedly blinds us to the appreciation of the uniqueness of human being and their acceptance as they are. Just accepting how people are, starting from what they bring, respecting their life philosophies, and enhancing who they want to become, as the basis of Jung's psychology, Seligman's positive psychology or Cooperrider's Appreciative Inquiry, we can respect and honor the true nature of the human being.

What seems truly important based on this research is balancing, even through adversity, through the continuous development of the self, the family area, and the work dimension. Then, self, family, and work structures are drivers for action as people evolve through different life stages. As in social theory, where action presupposes structure (Giddens, 2006), in our case, people navigate through a triangular structure that varies along a lifetime as circumstances change and experience grows.

COVID-19 has impacted mental health exacerbating the search for answers to the universal questions, many times, shifting one's view of the world. But the unexpected passing of our loved ones arose another question: is our current life all there is?

Limitations

This study has been done with a community of HR practitioners geographically dispersed. A more significant sample in number and a more diverse functional responsibility might bring different outcomes.

Even though there were no significant differences in those drivers among all people interviewed, in spite of gender, age, civil status, professional level, or geography differences, exploring a bigger and more diverse sample might bring some nuances. Higher diversity in culture or geography might present exciting findings. It is well known that North American culture, to mention one example, is more individualistic compared to others (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003).

The sample belongs to the business for-profit community; thus, it might be worth evaluating what results can be obtained in a not-for-profit environment.

Implications for Practice

For years, more specifically, among economic adversity, management, and human resources have turned employees to be more "resources" than "humans." It is clear that management and HR, in particular, have

suffered from short-sight when it comes to considering the uniqueness and holistic nature of the human being because practitioners could have designed interventions to make a more meaningful work environment.

In a world job market that is evolving still, there is a war for talent that is becoming fiercer and more global. Employees not only search for jobs covering basic needs but for more exciting and meaningful responsibilities where they can indeed learn (Chalofsky et al., 2013), become themselves, and nurture the self as our research proofs. The responsibility of human resources becomes pivotal in that quest.

This study presents an enormous opportunity for further development in human resource management as well, where sub-disciplines such as selection, training and development, performance management, succession management, coaching, and career transitions would be open for new grounds and possibilities. When considering employees "humans," embracing the complexity and uniqueness of every human being, looking with fresh new eyes at the entire cosmology of a human being, possibilities are limitless.

Chalofsksy, the Director of the Human Resources Development Doctoral Program at George Washington University, narrates how employees expect work meaning and a meaningful workplace. Human resources has a golden opportunity to revitalize the human side of the discipline (Callahan & Ward, 2001) by becoming the catalyst of such transformation.

COVID-19 has impacted our mental health and our relationship with our jobs. After the lockdown, employees were questioning what is truly the role our jobs play in the big scheme of life. We have been experiencing how employees are quitting their jobs when there is not reconciliation with other life priorities such as better work–life balance, fulfilling social relationships, or better opportunities for taking care of oneself (physically, mentally, or transcendentally). High meaning in life act as a buffer against the difficulties of life, such as hardship produced by COVID-19 (Trzebiński et al., 2020).

The meaning of life has become critical in times of adversity and psychological crisis (Kalashnikova et al., 2022).

References

Bechtel Jayanti, E. (2011). Through a different lens: A survey of linear epistemological assumptions underlying HRD models. *Human Resource Development Review, 10*(1), 101–114.

Bernet, W., & Thomas, C. R. (2002). Children who remember previous lives: A question of reincarnation. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 41*(8), 1022–1023.

Blumer, H. (2009). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. University of California Press.

Bogart, G. C. (1994). Finding a life's calling. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 34*(4), 6–37.

Bogart, G. C. (1995). *Finding your life's calling: Spiritual dimensions of vocational choice* (1st ed.). Dawn Mountain Press.

Boyraz, G., Horne, S. G., & Waits, J. B. (2015). Accepting death as part of life: Meaning in life as a means for dealing with loss among bereaved individuals. *Death Studies, 39*(1), 1–11.

Callahan, J. L., & Ward, D. B. (2001). A search for meaning: Revitalizing the "human" in human resource development. *Human Resource Development International, 4*(2), 235–242.

Chalofsky, N., Cavallaro, L., & Cavallaro, L. (2013). A good living versus a good life: Meaning, purpose, and HRD. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 15*(4), 331–340.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Dik, B. J., O'Connor, W. F., Shimizu, A. B., & Duffy, R. D. (2019). Personal growth and well-being at work: Contributions of vocational psychology. *Journal of Career Development, 46*(1), 31–47.

Elangovan, A. R., Pinder, C. C., & McLean, M. (2010). Callings and organizational behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 76*(3), 428–440.

Flannery, M. (2017). Self-determination theory: Intrinsic motivation and behavioral change. *Oncology Nursing Forum, 44*(2), 155–156.

Friedman, H. L., & Hartelius, G. (2013). *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of transpersonal psychology*. Wiley.

Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*(6), 693–727.

García-Alandete, J. (2015). Does meaning in life predict psychological well-being? *The European Journal of Counselling Psychology, 3*(2), 89–98.

Giddens, A. (2006). *Central problems in social theory: Action, structure and contradiction in social analysis*. University of California Press.

Hall, D. T. (Tim), Yip, J., & Doiron, K. (2018). Protean careers at work: Self-direction and values orientation in psychological success. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 5*(1), 129–156.

Haynes, C. (2016). Identity, transcendence and the true self: Insights from psychology and contemplative spirituality. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies, 72*(4), 1–9.

Hicks, J. A., & Routledge, C. (Eds.). (2013). *The experience of meaning in life: Classical perspectives, emerging themes, and controversies*. Springer.

Hillman, J. (1996). *The soul's code: In search of character and calling* (Ballantine Books trade paperback edition). Ballantine Books.

Hulnick, H. R., & Hulnick, M. R. (2010). *Loyalty to your soul: The heart of spiritual psychology*. Hay House.

Kalashnikova, O., Leontiev, D., Rasskazova, E., & Taranenko, O. (2022, September 1). Meaning of life as a resource for coping with psychological crisis: Comparisons of suicidal and non-suicidal patients. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.957782.

Kets de Vries, M. F. R. (2016). The shaman, the therapist, and the coach. *Organisational and Social Dynamics, 16*(1), 1–18.

Kraus, K. T. (2018). The soul as the 'guiding idea' of psychology: Kant on scientific psychology, systematicity, and the idea of the soul. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A, 71*, 77–88.

Kuchinke, K. P. (2013). Human agency and HRD: Returning meaning, spirituality, and purpose to HRD theory and practice. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 15*(4), 370–381.

Laloux, F. (2014). *Reinventing organizations* (1st ed.). Nelson Parker.

Lambert, N. M., Stillman, T. F., Baumeister, R. F., Fincham, F. D., Hicks, J. A., et al. (2010). Family as a salient source of meaning in young adulthood. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 5*(5), 367–376.

Lee, J., Cho, D., & Suh, Y. J. (2017). Purpose and meaning in life and job satisfaction among the aged. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 85*(4), 377–402.

Markow, F., & Klenke, K. (2005). The effects of personal meaning and calling on organizational commitment: An empirical investigation of spiritual leadership. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 13*(1), 8–27.

Marriott, J. (1984). Hypnotic regression and past lives therapy: Fantasy or reality? *Australian Journal of Clinical Hypnotherapy and Hypnosis, 5*(2), 65–72.

McGuire, D., Garavan, T. N., Saha, S. K., & O'Donnell, D. (2006). The impact of individual values on human resource decision-making by line manager. *International Journal of Manpower, 27*(3), 251–273.

Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 25–35.

Morin, E. (2007). Restricted complexity, general complexity. In C. Gershenson, D. Aerts, & B. Edmonds (Eds.), *Worldviews, science and us: Philosophy and complexity* (pp. 1–25). World Scientific.

Neal, J. (Ed.). (2013). *Handbook of faith and spirituality in the workplace: Emerging research and practice*. Springer.

Noguti, V., & Bokeyar, A. L. (2014). Who am I? The relationship between self-concept uncertainty and materialism. *International Journal of Psychology, 49*(5), 323–333.

Percy, W. (2000). *The message in the bottle: How queer man is, how queer language is, and what one has to do with the other*. Picador USA : Distributed by St. Martin's Press.

Pirson, M. (2017). *Humanistic management: Protecting dignity and promoting well-being*. Cambridge University Press.

Reker, G. T., & Chamberlain, K. (Eds.). (2000). *Exploring existential meaning: Optimizing human development across the life span*. Sage.

Rogers, C. R. (1956). Becoming a person—Part II—What it means to become a person. *Pastoral Psychology, 7*(3), 16–26.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68–78.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Simpson, J. A., Weiner, E. S. C., & Oxford University Press (Eds.). (1989). *The Oxford English dictionary* (2nd ed.). Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.

Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. A. (1954/2015). *The worm at the core: On the role of death in life* (1st ed.). Random House.

Stevens, A. (2001). *Jung: A very short introduction* (Vol. 40). Oxford University Press.

Stevenson, I. (2001). In Jefferson (Ed.), *Children who remember previous lives: A question of reincarnation, rev.* McFarland.

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage.

Strohl, J. E. (1998). Transpersonalism: Ego meets soul. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 76*(4), 397–403.

Strohminger, N., Knobe, J., & Newman, G. (2017). The true self: A psychological concept distinct from the self. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 12*(4), 551–560.

Torrey, C. L., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Calling and well-being among adults: Differential relations by employment status. *Journal of Career Assessment, 20*(4), 415–425.

Trompenaars, A., & Woolliams, P. (2003). *Business across cultures*. Capstone.

Trzebiński, J., Cabański, M., & Czarnecka, J. Z. (2020). Reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic: The influence of meaning in life, life satisfaction, and assumptions on world orderliness and positivity. *Journal of Loss & Trauma, 25*(6/7), 544–557.

Ulrich, D. (2011). Leaders who make meaning meaningful. *Human Resource Management International Digest, 19*(2), 302–306.
Ward, S. J., & King, L. A. (2017). Work and the good life: How work contributes to meaning in life. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 37*, 59–82.
Weiss, B. L. (1988). *Many lives, many masters*. Simon & Schuster.

CHAPTER 13

Learning from Relational Ontologies Through Head and Heart: An Exploratory Collaborative Autoethnography

Christian Earl List, Julia Storberg-Walker, Hermella G. Tekle, and Deyang Yu

Prologue

We (Hermella, Deyang (Mike), Christian, and Julia) are honored to share with you our experiences of working together through an innovative collaborative autoethnography (CAE) longitudinal study. This chapter consists of three components: (1) prologue with key themes

All authors contributed equally to this chapter; alphabetical order is used here.

C. E. List (✉) · J. Storberg-Walker (✉) · H. G. Tekle (✉) · D. Yu (✉)
Department in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: christian_list@gwmail.gwu.edu

J. Storberg-Walker
e-mail: jswalker@email.gwu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_13

and individual reflections; (2) full-length conference paper presented at Maharishi University's Consciousness Conference (May, 2021); and (3) epilogue.

We are offering the chapter with this structure to reinforce the temporal nature of CAE work. In this view, each time we present our research findings it is *of* the moment, *in* the moment, crystalized at that precise moment, and then immediately afterward dissolved. Our findings flow constantly and are never fixed, as in traditional research, because once we speak or write about our findings they generate new ideas, reflections, connections, openings, invitations, and questions.

You will read about what CAE is and about the first four months of our work together in the second component of this chapter. This component was written for an academic audience in May 2021 with citations, evidence, and acceptable logic for academe. This component tells the story of those first four months and needs to be read with that in mind. Initially, we were requested to slightly modify that paper for inclusion in this book. After much discussion, we believe that to modify the paper would confuse the temporality of our CAE work; if we add to that paper what we know now, it would conflate the developmental deepening we have experienced since we wrote the paper. We want readers to see the profound role of time in our CAE work, and so we are offering the prologue and epilogue, written in October/November 2021, as bookends to the May 2021 paper.

Of most importance, as you will see, we all have experienced a profound deepening of self-in-community, or a sense of authenticity/wholeness as we continue to 'unboundarize' ourselves. This involves healing and intention—both are present in our individual reflections as well. We did not collaborate on these writings, but the commonalities are striking and point to a unique shared experience of co-becoming together. We are experiencing and learning about the connection between becoming whole within ourselves and being able to stand whole in the company of others. We are learning about courage, vulnerability, cultures, love, and emergence. We often, now, have multiple synchronicities happen

H. G. Tekle
e-mail: hermellatekle@gwmail.gwu.edu

D. Yu
e-mail: deyangyu@gwmail.gwu.edu

and we are becoming used to them. We are enacting a relational ontology (Thayer-Bacon, 2017) and learning that the CAE is a remarkable place for individual and collective transformation.

As you will read below, all four of us wrote (although in different words) about an epistemic equality (Miller & Pinto, 2013) generated from an intentional diminishment of unequal power relations. This intentional diminishment was a process over time that generated intimate and active relationships (Crotty, 1998), a consciousness of connectedness (Leah & Laszlo, 2022), a quality of presencing (Scharmer, 2012) while at the same time being *with* each other (what we call *with-nessing*). Our consciousness of interdependence and co-emergence reminded Hermella of her home country's (Ethiopia's) communal life or *mahaberawi nuro* (መሐበራዊ ኑሮ), a mutual existence between communities and their surroundings. This consciousness is remarkable given the higher education culture of competitive individualism and global crises including climate change, polarized wealth, tribalism, migration due to war and natural disasters, and racial oppression. Through the CAE we experienced what Martin Luther King, Jr. called an inescapable network of mutuality, a consciousness of connectedness (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019), and a reciprocity of being. We hope that the reflections below begin to illuminate these profound shifts in our consciousness.

Individual Reflections

Julia's Reflections

When I imagined offering doctoral students an opportunity to work on a CAE project on consciousness, I thought that I would be the faculty advisor and that the students would be 'in' the CAE. I would be like the scientist, and the students would be in the petri dish. I initiated a call for volunteers in December 2020 and in January 2021, we four had our first meeting. At that meeting, it was clear that the students expected me to be in the petri dish with them, and I was torn between faculty responsibility/separation and concerned about *becoming too human* to my students. I am finding myself more and more in these relational spaces where I am asked/expected to dissolve my ego (to the extent possible) to conduct research. This is called getting closer (Cuomo, 2020):

> …knowledge producers who aim to *get closer* abandon the dream of scientific progress which seeks absolute knowledge in the service of enlightened

> mastery and wealth, working instead for knowledge that acquaints us with the particulars of the world we affect. Arrogant inquiries accept a comfortable distance between knowledge and life, and hide their limits and inadequacies behind an epistemic (knowledge-making) posture that proclaims a unified route to knowing, a route that necessarily follows traditions of privilege and exclusion. (Cuomo, 2020, pp. 66–67; italics added)

Getting closer requires entering into a reciprocal relationship with another or group of others, and as a researcher this means that I am co-becoming with my students. This enactment of relations generates research continually unfolding findings that are transformative and liberatory, healing, and expansive. It also requires courage, trust, and commitment.

Never in my years of teaching have I had such a powerful experience with my students as I have had in this CAE. I have learned so much about my 'teacher identity' that I had not examined, and I believe it is making me a more present and anchored educator. I have learned that I can be fully human with my students and dissolve the human-made barrier between 'me' and 'them.' I have learned that I can let my students into my heart, discuss matters of the heart, and talk about deep issues such as meaning, life, and the cosmos. These conversations are transformative, spacious, and generative. I am grateful for Mike, Hermella, and Christian and their decision to take this step into the unknown. On top of marriages, births, doctoral studies, full-time work, and COVID, our CAE has thrived as an energizing, not energy-depleting, space.

Mike's Reflections

Our journey started in a connected way that has constructed the community of ours in these few months. Along with Dr. Storberg-Walker, Hermella, and Christian, we have so many exciting findings that emerged, evolved, and consolidated. Specifically, moving a step further on our finding of presencing, the four of us resonated with the term "withnessing" instead of "witnessing" (The Kilpisjärvi Collective et al., 2021), where we emphasize the relational ontology as well as the connected ontological consciousness. Another emerging thinking of mine regarding our learning community is related to Dostoevsky's quote in *The Brothers Karamazov* (2008), "let us be, first and above all, kind, then honest and then let us never forget each other!" What we have established within our community is a kind of dynamic relations that consists of varieties of

our doing identities and positionalities, but it is also a kind of "stable" relation that brings us a profound sense of safety and love regardless of the ongoing changing contexts. It is extremely precious in the vulnerable world today.

Collaboratively, we have built up a web that connects us through each of us crossing our liminality. Though we are as the nodes in the web individually, it is the social linkages created through *unboundarizing* ourselves with shared mindfulness and intention that define this web. Such a web is not physical, but it substantially moves us toward oneness and flourishing humanity. As an early stage study, we have already discovered a direction with potential, and the reflexive nature of our ongoing practice also enables our community to allow emerging linkages to occur within the web we have. Individually, upon constantly reflecting on our dialogues and practices, each of us has become more consciously aware of our identities and relationality, and each of us can contribute to the puzzle of the world with our unique colors and shapes.

Christian's Reflections

When I entered HOL as a doctoral student in the United States, society came under an opaque veil of COVID, social injustice, climate disaster, and political upheaval. Our University pivoted to virtual learning right when I started, so I have never attended a doctorate-level class in-person. I also have never met Mike or Hermella in-person; I have seen Julia before during my doctoral entrance interview, however she was teaching a class at the time while I was onlooking. I now consider all these people close confidants and with/holders of my deepest self as I transcend some of the aspects of my identity and theirs that I did not know I had, or was even possible to be/hold.

This past year we (us four), and society at large has demanded for some type of change. Seeking change feels dyadic, in a sense that there is a lack of middle ground. Like magnets facing each other, unwilling charged to oppose the other. What we did in this CAE is flip that script and we decided to *heart* one another, to *withness* with intention. During our latest reflections Hermella looked up the meaning of *intention* as it came up as an important keyword within our dialogue. Hermella found that intention, as a medical definition, is *the healing of wounds* (Farlex Partner Medical Dictionary, 2012). This meaning resonates in the deep, deep layers of our current CAE process which has profoundly matured

from the time this paper was written and presented to and presented herein.

Crotty (1998) in discussing the construction of meaningful reality, speaks to the origins and root meaning of the term "intentionality" which for me, is how I have come to make sense of our CAE process and relationship toward the heart and to know as a "reaching out into" (p. 44). Crotty (1998) states, "…intentionality posits a quite intimate and very active relationship between the conscious subject and the object of the subject's consciousness" (p. 44). However, if the subject and the object are melded in a collaborative relationship, then the knowing, the heart is in a reciprocal relationship where the sensemaking turns back on itself in a continuous intersecting loop. Imagery of whisking in a bowl, or kneading bread comes to mind, where there is a point of pressure, intention and extension. This is how we cross paradigms and *withness*—a continuous state of searching, drawing back, reflecting, and diving back in for more. Each time we draw a stronger bond and understand more about knowing in relation and peering beyond the paradigms we have come to find comfort.

Hermella's Reflections

The Dutch Post-Impressionist painter Vincent van Gogh (1880) once famously said, "The way to know life is to love many things." This quote eloquently summarizes my experience working with the CAE group, Dr. Storberg-Walker, Mike, and Christian for the past ten months. When our group got together in early 2021, we acknowledged how CAE is a different way of being and becoming through relational ontology; however, we had no expectations of the outcome of the work. Perhaps CAE is more a process than an outcome because every meeting and interaction created a new or refined appreciation of our work. It also created 'an epiphany' of each researcher's experiences shared through reflections followed by reading and discussing in a group setting (Ellis et al., 2011). One of the MIU conference themes was, "love is all we need," and my indigenous African identity that appreciates collectivism resonates with this statement. But, what is *love*? In one of our recent meetings, the word "intention" gave our work a different meaning as we learned that in the medical definition, it means "the healing process of a wound." The definition transcended us into a different appreciation for the word. Since the MIU conference, our meetings have felt as if we are peeling a layer into our consciousness as a way to unboundarize ourselves to be authentic

and intentional. In this context, I view *love* as a way of healing in relation to others and in the process transcending into an embodied experience where we *withness* our ontological consciousness.

The rich and dynamic process of co-constructing meaning was not easy, making CAE a unique methodology. The notion of time sat as the nucleus of our work and connected all of our concepts in our dialogue and paper. The concept of *time* took different interpretations and forms throughout the ten months of working together: it was a healer, a pressure, a space, a vulnerability, and an identity. As a space, the time allowed us to be comfortable with each other and for the individual researcher to reveal their authenticity and vulnerability in their subjective ways. Time also allowed us to co-construct a new group identity that is subjective, making our group's relationship dynamic and continuously evolving. In addition, the work we have done is not limited to the four of us. We have met with other scholars interested in the CAE methodology, which has fostered a deeper consciousness of *transcending paradigms* (Meadows, 1999) and deepening understanding of relational ontologies and consciousness.

Prologue Summary

This concludes the prologue, our individual reflections written between November and December 2021 on what the CAE has meant for us as co-researchers. The next section takes you back to May 2021 and offers a more scholarly treatment of our CAE work as presented at the Maharishi International University conference. This next section includes a methodological description of the CAE process, individual reflections (e.g., data used for analysis), emerging findings of our co-becoming together.

Part II: May 2021 CAE Research Paper

This paper (e.g. the paper submitted to the MIU conference in May 2021) presents the findings from an exploratory collaborative autoethnography (CAE) project undertaken by four co-researchers: three doctoral students and one doctoral faculty member. The purpose of the explorative CAE was to begin to understand the deeper, potentially transformative changes that might occur through learning about *and* enacting relational ontologies (Thayer-Bacon, 2017). The foundational premise or intuition supporting this study is that a union of *learning and enacting* through relations offers the potential for transformative change. We call

the union of learning and enacting learning *with/about/from*[1] to signify the holistic, integral nature of the experience.

In philosophy, ontology is the study of what ***is***; a relational ontology suggests that what ***is*** always is forever in the making through relations (Thayer-Bacon, 2010). In this way of understanding the world, the essence of a person or object is not found within the thing itself. Instead, the essence of a person or object is co-emergent with other persons and objects within a web of relations.[2]

Moving the focus of doctoral education from 'just' cognition and intellect into embodied enacting is a radical departure from typical doctoral programs. In these types of programs, philosophy has typically been thought of as being separate from practice, from being in the world. However, new ways of understanding the potential for a *practical philosophy* (Kemmis, 2010) or an *embodied philosophy* have emerged that unite cognitive learning with embodied action. A practical philosophy approach "regards practice and especially praxis as 'internal' to the persons and groups whose practice/praxis it is, and as 'internal' to the practice traditions which give meaning and significance to a practice" (Kemmis, 2010, p. 9). Embodied philosophy is defined as "…not a philosophy of the intellect alone, but (is) an integrated, non-dualistic living wisdom…that bridges the gap between historical, text-based scholarship and the embodied practices" (https://www.embodiedphilosophy.com/mission-founders/). Given the substantial global crises facing the planet, we argue that a practical or embodied philosophy approach is a critical component of weathering or 'living in' the next decades.

> In a cultural climate exhibiting increasing levels of anxiety and depression, stress and alienation, hyper-vigilance, and divisive rhetoric, EP (embodied philosophy) recognizes the need for what we call embodied philosophical living. (https://www.embodiedphilosophy.com/mission-founders/)

As a response, this CAE study intended to both examine and foster a deeper consciousness of *transcending paradigms* as the critical leverage point for systemic transformation (Meadows, 1999) and a way to connect individual and collective transformation (Waddock, 2020). Thus, the CAE

[1] Thank you to Dr. Mariella Campuzano for this wording.

[2] See, for example, Braidotti (2017).

was moving research into action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005) challenging the co-researchers to move beyond intellect and cognition alone to sense, describe, explore, be curious about, and reflect on the deeper embodied significance of a relational ontology. In sum, through the CAE process, we sought to understand and experience *individual* learning and transformation generating *collective* learning and transformation *with/about/from* each other.

Methodology

CAE is a process enabling the study of the self with/in a collective (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). Through participative and emancipatory discourse, CAE can catalyze a learning community in which each person unveils their truth as experienced and stands as a witness to the truth of the other (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). The inquiry allows access to learners' private worlds and can provide rich data on lived experiences from diverse social and cultural perspectives (Longman et al., 2015).

The CAE structure can create an epiphany of each researcher's experiences shared through reflections followed by reading and discussing in a group setting (Ellis et al., 2011). For example, in this study each co-researcher shared personal reflections on the four prompts listed below, and journaling and transcripts of multiple conversations were exchanged, reviewed, and reflected on. The prompt questions' goal was to challenge the group to become conscious of realities that have not been thought of or felt/sensed before by reflecting on relational ontologies.

- What is my heart asking of me as I reflect on and sense?
- What is my embodied sensing about relationality/relational philosophies?
- What is my cognition/intellect telling me about relational philosophies?
- How is this shift manifesting in me as an active agent/doctoral student?

Each individual reflection can be considered to be a form of autoethnography, where the researcher is the focus of reflexive inquiry positioned in a socio-cultural context (Haynes, 2018). These reflections

strive to connect personal experience to cultural process and understanding by using a back-and-forth gaze to focus outward on those socio-cultural contexts while also looking inward at the vulnerable self. Thus, the reflections are an intentional pursuit of an understanding of the self within a socio-cultural context, recording interpretations as the experience unfolds.

As the prompts illustrate, and aligned with the purpose of the study, co-researchers agreed to move beyond cognition/intellect to make sense of learning *with/about/from* each other grounded in a relational ontological embodied/practical philosophy. First, the co-researchers decided to focus on the heart question, which is the focus of this paper. Future work will expand to include subsequent prompts. Second, the co-researchers shared their responses through encrypted email exchange and a number of secure shared Google folders. Co-researchers individually read and reflected on each other's journaling, and then met as a group to dialogue, witness, and learn from each other's reflections. Dialogue in this CAE setting provided the co-construction of narratives that brought forth the relational experiences where co-researchers shared and made sense of their environment (Ellis et al., 2011). The facilitated discussions, a sort of experiential laboratory or container, allowed the union of enacting and learning *with/about/from* the phenomenon of relationality/relational paradigms.

After the first facilitated dialogue, researchers identified themes (as shown in Table 13.1) and reflected on their interactions, including emotion-laden experience (Dirkx, 2014) generated from the dialogue. The dialogue also allowed researchers to learn about each other's lived experiences and learn about how our consciousness about paradigms might inform our collective learning and development. The dialogue allowed for both a deeper self- and other-awareness of the critical elements, reflexive moments, or transformation forces we are experiencing.

Emerging Findings

This section presents the emerging findings from the ongoing research, specifically focused on prompt #1: "What is my heart asking of me as I reflect on and sense?" as we collectively learn *with/about/from* relational ontologies. Five themes emerged from our preliminary analysis:

Table 13.1 Resonant themes of each co-researcher

Deyang	*Hermella*	*Christian*	*Julia*
Ontological consciousness, Doing identities, Presencing in dialogue	Doing Identities (relational, multiple, oral histories), Presencing (emotional labor vs. authenticity), positionality, consciousness	Doing Identities, Positionality, and Power, [Time; still to be determined how/what/where time matters]	Presencing, Positionality, & Power

1. Doing Identities (identities are performed, lived, earned, unearned, enacted in relation)
2. Relations (web, connection, information, energy, network)
3. Presencing (engaging, witnessing, being with)
4. Positionality & Power (authentic vs. emotional labor, vulnerability, courage)
5. Ontological Consciousness (learning, linking, knowing, and being)

We offer our analysis that generated the themes in three ways: (1) through Table 13.1, each co-researcher identifies the most *resonant*[3] theme/pattern from our collective analysis; (2) through Fig. 13.1, the group collectively offers an 'imaginary' image of the emerging findings that will guide future research; and (3) through individual reflections on the findings, each co-researcher shares how their deepening understanding of relational ontologies is transforming both their cognitive and embodied presence as human beings.

Resonant Themes

The first way we illuminate our preliminary findings is through resonant themes. The co-researchers agreed to individually identify the themes that most resonated with them as integral human beings. Resonance is a form of validity used in transpersonal research (see Footnote #3).

As illuminated in Table 13.1, the emerging findings (not surprisingly) suggest that each co-researcher is experiencing learning *about/from/with* relational ontologies in slightly different ways. Only one of the five themes

[3] See Anderson and Braud (2011) for a discussion of the use of *resonance* in qualitative research as a form of research validity.

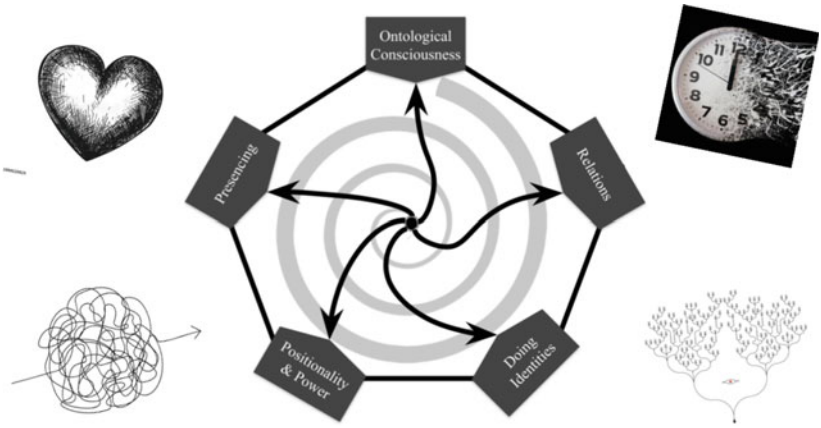


Fig. 13.1 Emerging CAE findings

emerged as 'resonant' to each co-researcher: all co-researchers resonate with a knowing that their *identities are changing* in some way through learning *about/with/from* a relational ontology.

Preliminary Imaginary/Model of Learning/Enacting Relational Ontologies

The second way we illuminate our preliminary findings is through an imaginary image. One co-researcher (the faculty member) synthesized the four individual hand-drawn images (see Appendix)[4] through an aesthetic,

[4] For this chapter, we were asked to remake the hand-drawn images to make them more traditional—e.g., professional. We requested to allow them to remain as is. To us, the hand-drawn graphics are an artifact that is situated in a historical moment. During our earlier meetings in preparation for the MIU conference, our group co-constructed the graphics in which each researcher drew what we collectively called c*onceptual imaginary*. This idea emerged as our group was discussing themes we identified from our reflection papers and dialogue. In this CAE setting, the hand-drawn graphics provided the co-construction of narratives that brought forth the relational experiences' where co-researchers shared and made sense of their environment (Ellis et al., 2011). We argue that the hand-drawn graphics align with the three MIU conference themes because they show creativity with imagination, complimentary, and opposing paradigms in how each co-researcher identified themes, and the co-construction of graphics locates it in an interpersonal and historical moment.

non-linear way and came up with an image, representing the imaginary. All co-researchers then reviewed the initial image and generated a consensus imaginary as illuminated in Fig. 13.1.

The imaginary blends the heart, complex relations, chaos/uncertainty, the tight structure and dissolving of time, with the five themes generated from our analysis. The themes are represented in a circle with spiral looping to illustrate the always-emergent becoming within a relational ontological perspective. Simply understood, each theme becomes more or less salient for each co-researcher, depending on the needs, goals, or limitations of the context (e.g., chaos, relations, time, and heart). To honor the individuality of each co-researcher, Appendix contains images of each hand-drawn model that illuminates how each co-researcher made sense of the emerging findings.

Individual Reflections

The third way we illuminate our preliminary findings is through individual reflective journaling. Each co-researcher prepared the following tentative, partial, and contingent sensemaking writing to describe their experiences, knowings, sensings, and understandings of learning *from/with/about* each other.

Deyang (Mike). By practicing Collaborative Autoethnography, we have derived a nest model for emerging themes including ontological consciousness, relations, doing identities, positionality and power, and presencing. I feel most resonated with ontological consciousness, doing identities, and presencing throughout the dialogues. Specifically, all these themes are related through existentialism (Sartre & Frechtman, 1947) in a way of discussion about fluid, dynamic, and doing identity. Consciousness is the foundation of this discussion to show how our noema can be related to the objective world.

Ontological Consciousness. Consciousness has been examined by scholars from various disciplines including biophysics, neuroscience, cosmology research, social science, etc. Yet one of the core issues of consciousness is how to relate the subjective inner experience to the substantialized brain activities (Thurman, 2008). There might not be causality behind these two elements, and that restrengthened the importance of consciousness as being a scarce instrument with which we can discover the profound mystery of subjective and objective worlds. Thus, ontological consciousness is very essential to our Collaborative

Autoethnography activities as it is involved in all reflection, interaction, and analysis activities. It is where our motivation, emotion, and expectation come from, but it is also a vulnerable, subjective, and intangible source that might easily lead to illusion and biased cognitions such as spectrum inversion and generalized use-mention confusion (Thau, 2002). Throughout the Collaborative Autoethnography reflection, consciousness is mentioned several times in regards to identities and connectedness, and intentionality can explain the relation of consciousness and the dynamic chaos or uncertainty discussed (Vagle, 2018). When I reflect on my own cognition of consciousness, I realized that occasionally I started questioning the boundary of subjectivity and objectivity, because when I was educated that how my brain will process the neural signals and trigger inner perceptional experience, I cannot find the rigorous boundary to differentiate subjective world and the objective one. However, with intentionality, I am able to play with consciousness to shift my own positionality in different scenarios to acquire different experiences.

Doing Identity. Identity is another key element from our Collaborative Autoethnography activities. Narrowly, identity is defined as the totality of one's self-construal (Weinreich, 1986). Thus, identity should be static, summarizing, and certain, but the fact is that, through the dialogue, we found that our identities are fluid, emerging, and dynamic. We do not hold one identity for long usually, instead, though we may have the same nominal identity, our identities are different each moment. Doing identity refers to our reflection of enacting the identity by doing it. It is very closely related to Sartre's thought of for-itself being (Flynn, 2011), where being is defined using a bottom-up approach focusing on the behavior instead of a top-down definition. Multiple identities are often mentioned, but fluidly doing identity is breaking my understanding of identity. Etymologically, identity originates from the Latin idem, which means "same," and it means "state of being the same" (Identity, n.d.), thus the nature of identity is being and being differentiable. Doing identity is an emphasis on self-positionality as well. While we reflect on who we are, we always recreate our identity by intervening with the existing situation, and that new identity is what we earned through doing. Identity here is not simply a title or a position but a set of identifiers, in other words, you have to earn your identity. For instance, if your identifiers changed, your identity would change accordingly though you may still hold the same title. Therefore, doing identity is a reminder to me that I

am in a dynamic world where I can become who I want to be by doing what I ought to do.

Presencing. When it comes to presencing, it reminds me of Theory U by Scharmer (2012). He proposed that presencing happens when the boundaries of the presence of past, the presence of future, and the presence of one's authentic self collapse, and thereafter we will experience a profound shift. That resonates with me when I reflect on our Collaborative Autoethnography dialogues. Also, presencing enhances sensing, and that means when you are fully present, your sense will be activated to the next level just as how sensing enhances seeing. Relating to Sartre's thoughts of existentialism (Flynn, 2011), presensing can be seen as an immersive way of doing, and it creates the possibility for us to consciously bring ourselves afront of the boundaries. From another perspective, presencing is not external enactment, and our mind is connected to the substantial world. Subjective and objective aspects seem to separate our mind from the world, but, inside, they are all together, and it is not possible to separate our mind from its surrounding environment. Presencing changes our perception both externally and internally, when I meditate, I can feel my presencing when I sensed my breathing in and out peacefully, and both my mind and my body are empowered by my presencing. Similarly, when I fully present elsewhere, this special boundary collapse will push me into a higher level of sensing, and this shift in perception will also change my cognition of my doing identity, which probably will lead to an emerging identity. Thus, presencing to me is more like a process of creating a rapport between my authentic self and the surrounding circumstances.

Hermella. The notion of quantum in relational identity is fascinating. From the quantum lens, the universe is interconnected in space and time where consciousness is coextensive outside of the brain. This perspective resonates with my salient identity and my worldview of reciprocity and wholeness of the universe. In African Indigenous moral theory, actions are related to harmoniously living with others and honoring communal relationships. This afro-communitarian principle creates a reciprocal relationship between people and nature, which generates solidarity and collectivism.

Relational Identity. For example, Ubuntu, which gained attention in South Africa during the struggle against Apartheid, describes African

ethics and the humanistic philosophy of reconciliation and collective oneness (Gade, 2013; Metz & Gaie, 2010). The full term 'Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu' in the Zulu/Xhosa/Ndebele/Sesotho/Shona languages express that "a person is a person through other persons" (Metz & Gaie, 2010, p. 274; Thayer-Bacon, 2017, p. 117). Ubuntu shows the interconnectedness of humanity through the consciousness of the self in relation to the community.

Similarly, in Ethiopia, communal life or *mahaberawi nuro* (መሐበራዊ ኑሮ) emphasizes the mutual existence between communities and their surroundings. The Ethiopian culture values relationships and interdependence over individualism and independence. This collective mindset transcends into the daily lives of the people through different cultural norms, for example, long hours of coffee ceremonies. Growing up in such a community influenced my identity through oral stories about my ancestors and interactions with those around me. Also, I view relational identity as co-constructed and subjective to different contexts. The four of us working on this research brought in our lived experience and co-construct a learning community that fosters a new relational identity. Our positionality as three students and one professor transpired as a community of practice that is subjective to the group.

Multiple Identities. I view identity as something that is constituted and reconstituted through different interactions. From this standpoint, identity is more of a becoming process rather than a fixed notion. I wear multiple identity hats in school, the workplace, when I visit my country, and at home. Identity, for me, is contextual, fluid, and overlaps in different identity factors. The complexity of identities is particularly fascinating when we wear clashing identities. The more I live in the Western world, the more my cultural identity has molded to balance the new culture of my Ethiopian roots. It is often challenging to balance the two cultures that are often in contradiction. Nonetheless, the stories of others and their lived experiences influence my multiple identities that are continuously becoming and changing. Participating in the CAE dialogue also added a new set of identities that allowed me to go out of my comfort zone and form an identity that is subjective to the group.

Oral History and Identity. Oral history and stories are critical to Indigenous knowledge and connect with the sacred land and Indigenous identity (Hart, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Oral history is also a significant aspect for Ethiopians to learn about cultural roots and connect with

their ancestors. My grandmother's stories taught me more than reading a textbook and connected me to my ancestors' stories and values. The lived experiences of others and their stories also molded my identity. For example, my perception of LGBTQ+ rights has drastically changed after learning about the lived experiences of those I interacted with while it is a taboo topic in my country.

Presencing. When I think about authenticity, especially how much authenticity one brings to the workplace or school, I think about intelligence platforms that 'track' activities. My workplace uses a revenue intelligence platform that leverages artificial intelligence and machine learning to gain insights into how their sales teams operate and close deals. These types of intelligence platforms are compelling, particularly from a competitor insight perspective. They are also an excellent way to analyze how employees work where the insight can be used as a learning experience. The other side of the coin is the conformity that comes from using such platforms. From this standpoint, I view authenticity as something that is negotiated and contextual. I am cognizant of how much authenticity I am willing to bring; perhaps most of us have a similar approach to the workplace and school. As technology advances and the fear associated with machine learning rises, scholars and practitioners need to study the emotional labor associated with the intelligence platforms. For instance, in the platform I mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph, the salesperson would receive a scorecard on their interaction after each call. The goal is to reach the percentage the platform recommends, which is used as an indicator of performance. As I follow the recommendations and try to reach the platforms' top rating, how much of my authenticity am I letting go?

Positionality. I reflect on my positionality as a Black woman and a foreigner within the George Washington University (GWU) as a predominantly white school. As the institution gets more diverse from faculty, staff, and students' fronts, the diverse voices change how the institution functions. In our CAE dialogue, we discussed how we are active players in the game as scholar-practitioners. While it is essential to bring in diverse voices, we also have to learn how to navigate academia to understand the issue from different angles and change it. These efforts to make academia more diverse start in the classroom, where educators open discussions that challenge academia's traditional and Western mindset.

Dialogue education, a constructivist approach to adult learning, moves the focus from passive learning to active participation in a dialogue that leads to learning (Vella, 2016). The community of practice of the Executive Leadership Program (ELP) encourages students and faculty to engage in learning interaction from each other's lived experiences. As the more knowledgeable others, faculty's guidance helps students pass their liminal zone to reach their desired learning goal as scholar-practitioners. It is crucial to include different worldviews and research methodologies into dominant conversations in scholarship and practice. It is commendable that the ELP creates a space for this type of dialogue by distilling diverse worldviews and philosophies.

Christian. Of the themes from our CAE reflections, I resonate with 'doing identities' and 'positionality and power' the most, finding that each of us is impacted by how we navigate various identities within the graduate and academic space. This occurs as a relationship to positionality and power within our spheres of influence and also as free will to enact identities according to our values and beliefs, some of which are more salient outside of norms within the graduate school of education.

Doing Identities. Being in a program designed for organizational leaders, it is easy for me to think about the authenticity and transparency associated with good leadership and followership, and how this is supported by 'doing' identity. There are many in leadership roles but I would not say that all leaders 'by title' are leaders 'by doing leadership.' Therefore, on behalf of those whom I may have an impact, I try to enact my identity claims in ways that serve others and myself according to that identity. As a budding anti-racist who is also a white cis-gendered male graduate student, I undertake identity work that explores and interrogates my own whiteness within the academic institution. This serves my own development, however by undertaking various worldviews and questioning the assumptions behind whiteness at the institutional and structural level, I believe I am enacting an anti-racist identity that can facilitate a contradiction to taken-for-granted norm perpetuating institutionalized racism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Ray, 2019) of whiteness within academia (Jupp et al., 2019) within my sphere of influence within the graduate school. Enacting identity for me, within Academia and the graduate school, is directly related to what others have noted as a struggle between positionality and power to include the presencing necessary to enact these identities despite social woes of the past year.

Positionality and Power. All of our reflections have in some way noted how positionality and power influence our roles as students, faculty, and employees within organizations. All come with their own 'rules' and opportunities, however they also expose loopholes. These loopholes are at the core of our reflections surrounding positionality and power. For Julia, the loophole manifested in skillfully constructed questions to power. For me, I interrogate whiteness within myself in partnership with institutional whiteness. This CAE for example is a way for us to enact a contradiction to traditional Euro Western ways of knowing and collaborating within the structures of institutional power and rigor to 'good' scholarship; henceforth, a loophole. I guess one can say we are flipping power in the name of enacting an institutional contradiction, facilitating a more dialogic and relational ontology over a positivist and modern way of knowing. Among all our coursework and commitments as doctoral students and as a faculty, we have chosen to supplement our obligations with this CAE. Therefore, related to enacting identity, we are enacting our dialogic selves to co-create rather than be held to a prescription; We are prescribing the learning we desire. Additionally, we also find ourselves balancing a power relationship among ourselves, and we have done this quite well. The CAE has created room for us four to become co-creators and mutual learners with an otherwise hierarchical relationship of students and faculty. We have been exposed to the worldviews of the other, stretching ontological frameworks and incorporating some of each perspective.

Time. Throughout all this however is the opaque veil of time which binds all our concepts. Time for example acts upon the CAE as a pressure to complete the dialogue, reflection, and analysis (currently, I feel like I am under a time crunch). Time is also a resource, enabling us to presence toward the activities which allow us to 'do' our identities. As scholar-practitioners in a world of various commitments, we are facilitated or constrained by how we move through time. As a doctoral student, I know I never have enough time…, however, I manage and I learn.

Julia. This CAE study has been a labor of love, a surprisingly energizing and expanding project embedded in the context of COVID, higher education chaos, and resource constraints. I am amazed that adding this project to my heaping pile, adding hours of dedicated focus and time to an already overloaded schedule actually *gave* me energy. And yet it did. As we co-researchers shared over and over—when we co-create a space to show up fully and authentically, we are actually generating a space or

container of shared commitment and learning that is itself a catalyst for transformation.

I had an emergent vision for this project in late 2020 and invited doctoral students to participate in January 2021. Initially, I envisioned my role OUTSIDE the group, mainly as a facilitator/supporter of THEIR research. However, at the first meeting the students firmly announced that I needed to be in, not out. So be it.

As a faculty member I navigated the in-between space as best I could throughout the process; naming my influence/power frequently and asking for 'checks' on it from the co-researchers. I navigated the moving terrain between co-researcher and faculty member through discernment and connecting to my heart (as in, what is my heart telling me to do?). I was and am perfectly imperfect in all that I do.

I already believed in the power of relational ontologies to shift consciousness before the start of the study; the reason for the study was to test my belief. Actually; no, the reason for the study was to start building understanding and knowing about *how* relational ontologies might impact doctoral students which could *then* be extended (through future studies) to understanding the shift in consciousness. I had a hunch/intuition that the s*how* was connected to seeing the interconnectedness of all (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019; Wall Kimmerer, 2013) and that this might be pedagogically possible through an embodied learning pedagogy focused on relational ontologies, or learning *from/about/with* each other. I extend gratitude to Dr. Mariella Campuzano for introducing me to the naming of this process.

Presencing & Positionality/Power Based on our preliminary findings, the pedagogical implications are exciting, and the potential for re-claiming embodied wisdom in doctoral education is growing. For me personally, the twin themes of *presencing* and *positionality/power* resonate most clearly. Perhaps this is because of my dual role (co-researcher and project catalyst); but perhaps it is also because of my passion for helping others transform their worldview and ways of being in the world. I constantly challenged myself to 'show up' for meetings with a generous heart, acknowledging multiple commitments but also being explicit about my intention to show up as centered, focused, and spacious. This is presencing—a palpable energy in our learning community that each of us brought forth.

In terms of positionality/power, I knew that the 'juice' to run the machine had to come from me. The three other co-researchers were overburdened doctoral students—working, living, parenting, moving, surviving…in the context of COVID and social unrest in the United States. I used my position and power to invite participation; I sought to co-create an egalitarian process for non-hierarchical relations to flourish. I learned more from these three co-researchers over the past few months about myself and my vision for myself as an educator than I've learned in a long, long, long time. I learned the value of stepping in with radical vulnerability; the rewards are great and continue to deepen over time. I'm grateful.

Summary of Individual Reflections

Each of the four co-researchers generated the statements above in a context of chaos (COVID), civic polarization, time constraints, and major life events including marriage, health concerns, and job stressors. We suggest that the context might be considered both a constraint and a catalyst—a yin/yang relationship. This paradox is interesting because it is connected to traditions of wisdom across cultures and time—one needs to know suffering in order to know joy. In addition, the statements illuminate the richness of autoethnographic writing that can offer glimpses of deep meaning and soul.

Summary and Future Directions

As described earlier, the purpose of the explorative CAE was to begin to understand the deeper, potentially transformative changes that might occur through learning about *and* enacting relational ontologies (learning *about/from/with*). We described that ontology is the study of what ***is***; and a relational ontology suggests that what ***is*** always is forever in the making through relations (Thayer-Bacon, 2017). The foundational premise or intuition supporting this study is that a union of *learning and enacting* offers the potential for transformative change. This premise pushes the boundaries of doctoral education beyond just intellect and cognition, and calls for the return of wisdom and embodiment in higher education.

Specifically, valuing or legitimizing non-rational, non-cognitive knowing is a radical departure from typical doctoral programs. Legitimizing non-cognitive knowing as a source of data challenges the traditional belief of hierarchy of knowledge. It also challenges the Cartesian separation of mind and body, the belief that objective knowledge can be discovered, and that 'good' research is only rational and value-free. All of these beliefs undergird higher education in general, and seep into doctoral education in multiple, often invisible ways.

This CAE upended those beliefs and instead generated and documented deeply transformative insights. The CAE offers a preliminary model (or imaginary) based on the thick, rich data generated through journaling and transcriptions of hours of conversation and dialogue. The CAE was a liminal space for each co-researcher; interestingly, the liminality was experienced differently for each of us. For me, Julia, I found my liminality to be the space between faculty and student; between teacher and learner; between catalyst and catalyzed. For me, Hermella, the notion of liminality was evident in the progression of our dialogue and reflections from January to April and the value of CAE as a method to understand and make sense of my relational identity with the group. For me, Deyang, my liminality is the boundaries of presencing, through the boundaries collapsing, I acquired my relational identity as doing identity as well as my own power and positionality. For me, Christian my liminality is the boundary between 'doing' identity and visioned identity. Using one of my reflection metaphors, I have peered past the event horizon of relational liminality, 'becoming' one with my peers and among the chaos of our individual lives.

From these findings and experiences, we envision these possible next steps for this work: (a) to keep working on the rest of the prompts: embodied sensing about rationality, cognition/intellect telling about relational philosophies, and how the shift manifests in us as active agents; (b) to further develop the emerging themes from the CAE conversation and dialogue; (c) to expand our research to a longitudinal study and dive into the transformative changes occurred within the learning community.

The study also suggests possible future research and practice implications. For example, interesting research questions include how might the different elements of our model relate to each other? How might the role (doctoral student, parent, employee) matter to the shift in identities? How might culture, gender, or other forms of difference influence receptivity to/resonance with relational ontologies?

The implications for doctoral pedagogy are also exciting, and include (a) creating co-generative small teams of faculty and students to explore learning *from/with/about* embodied philosophy; (b) implementing small-scale action research projects as an intentional community-building strategy; and (c) legitimating non-Euro Western ways of knowing, being, and relating in doctoral education.

The time is right for this shift. The method is innovative and contributes to Donnella Meadow's vision of transcending paradigms. Why not go for it?

Epilogue

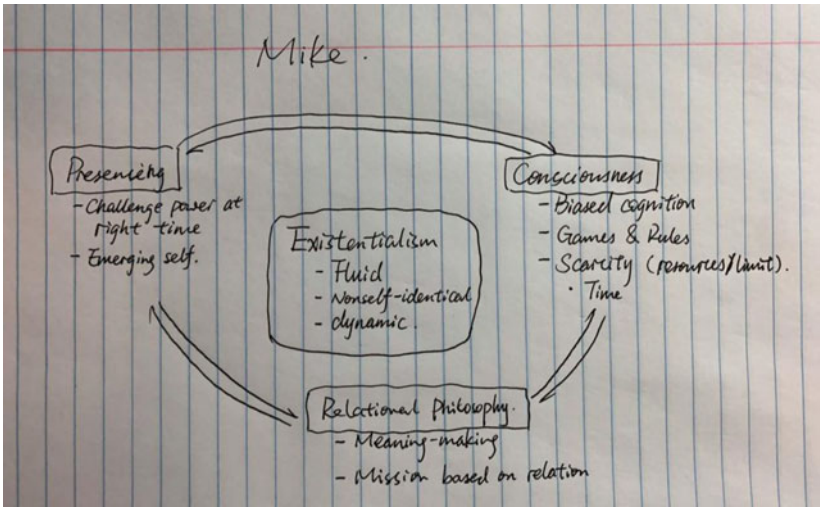
As described in the preceding section, this CAE process might be considered a new pedagogical process for engaging the whole being—both teacher and student—in liberatory and transformative education. Especially in higher education, where norms of separation and reductionism prevail, this type of integral process might be able to foster the development of wisdom, so sorely needed in this historical moment.

We will continue to talk together on our collective CAE path, and the 'fruits' of this labor of love continue to come to us. For example, Hermella is starting a new CAE with a group of global scholars in the Academy of Management; I (Julia) am involved in another CAE with scholars Lyla June Johnston (who identifies as Dinè) and Dr. Nicole Dillard (who identifies as African American)—the three of us are writing on decolonizing the academy and imagining new futures for higher education. We have found that CAE unleashes us from the constraints of the now, and allows space for liberatory thought and imaginings. Mike is connecting the CAE work to his doctoral focus on developing a sustainability mindset, and recently led our group in a virtual presentation in mainland China. And Christian is linking his experiences 'doing' identities in the CAE with his doctoral focus on critical whiteness studies and antiracism praxis in the academy.

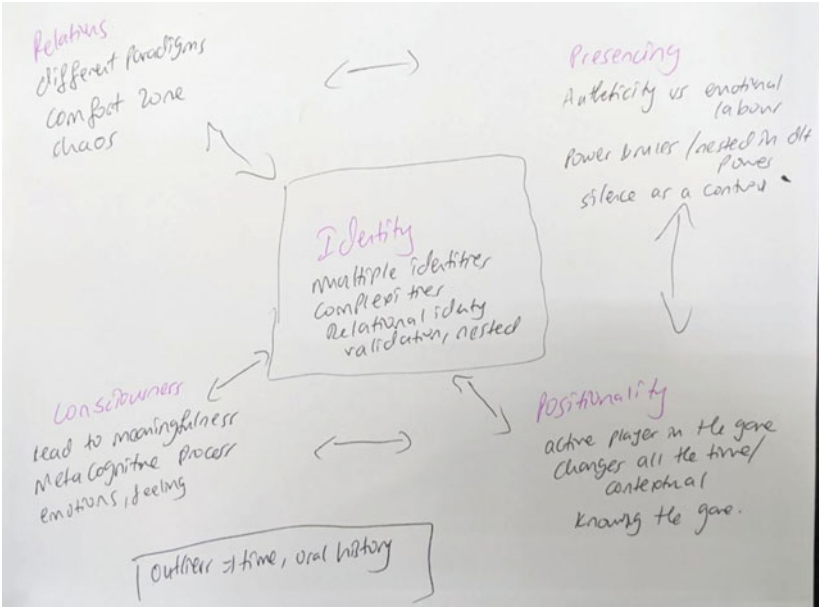
Doing and being are often separated; it might be that in the CAE the distinctions are blurred. We *do* and *be* in reciprocal relationship with each other; we learn, ask questions, think metaphorically, and always enter into our shared space with intention, we withness. And, as you recall, intention in the medical field is 'the healing process of a wound.' Imagine what the world might be like if we all held this highest of intention!

Appendix

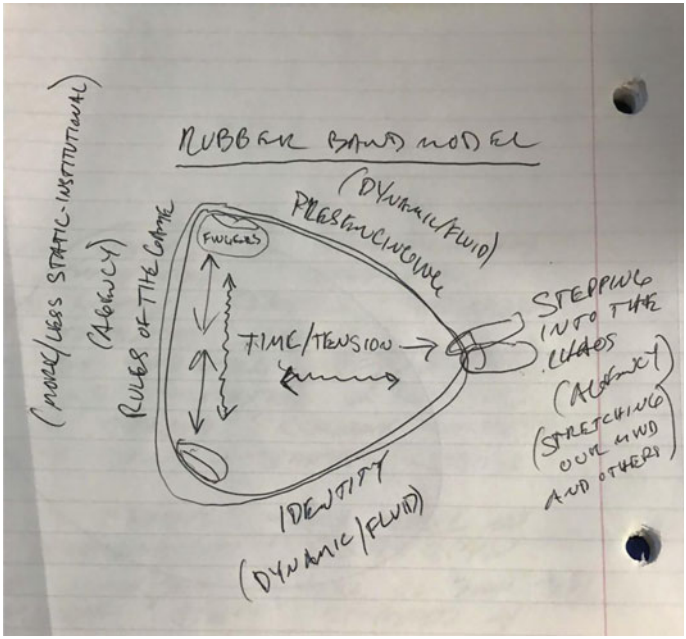
Deyang's Model



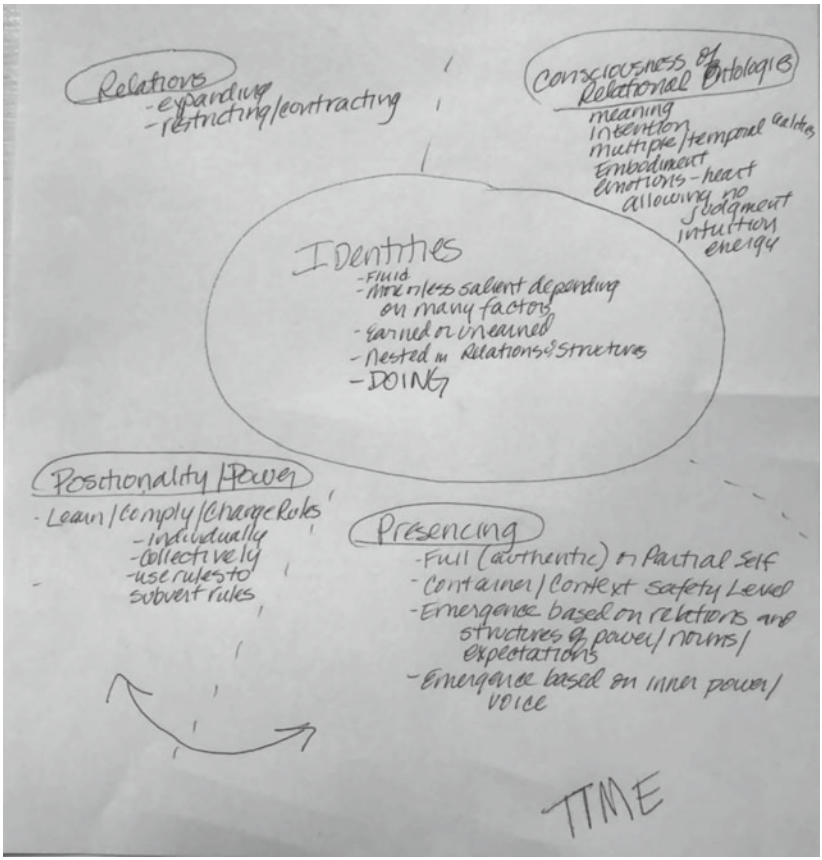
Hermella's Model



Christian's Model



Julia's Model



References

Anderson, R., & Braud, W. (2011). *Transforming self and others through research: Transpersonal research methods and skills for the human sciences and humanities*. SUNY Press.

Braidotti, R. (2017). A theoretical framework for the critical posthumanities. *Theory, Culture, & Society, 36*(6), 31–61.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.

Cuomo, C. (2020). Knowledge and moral motivation: Getting closer. *Tarka, 0*, 62–67.

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review, 48*(2), 147–160.

Dirkx, J. M. (2014). The inner work of self-formation in work-related learning. In N. E. Chalofsky, T. S. Rocco, & M. L. Morris (Eds.), *The handbook of human resource development* (pp. 246–261). Jossey-Bass.

Dostoyevsky, F. (2008). Chapter 96. In C. Garnett (Trans.), *The brothers Karamazov*. Essay, Dodo Press.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12*(1). http://proxygw.wrlc.org/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxygw.wrlc.org/scholarly-journals/autoethnography-overview/docview/870465772/se-2?accountid=11243

Farlex Partner Medical Dictionary. (2012). *Intention*. https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/intention

Flynn, T. (2011). *Jean-Paul Sartre*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sartre/

Gade, C. B. N. (2013). What is Ubuntu? Different interpretations among South Africans of African descent. *South African Journal of Philosophy, 31*(3), 484–503. https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2012.10751789

Hart, A. M. (2010). Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and research: The development of an Indigenous research paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Voices in Social Work, 1*(1), 1–16.

Haynes, K. (2018). Autoethnography. In C. Cassell A. L. Cunliffe, & G. Grandy (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative business and management research methods* (pp. 17–31). Sage. https://www-doi-org.proxygw.wrlc.org/10.4135/9781526430236.n2

Identity. (n.d). Online etymology dictionary. https://www.etymonline.com/word/identity

Jupp, J. C., Leckie, A., Cabrera, N. L., & Utt, J. (2019). Race-evasive white teacher identity studies 1990–2015: What can we learn from 25 years of research? *Teachers College Record, 121*(1), 1–58.

Kemmis, S. (2010). Research for praxis: Knowing doing. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 18*(1), 9–27.

Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2005). *Participatory action research: Communicative action and the public sphere*. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (p. 559–603). Sage.

Leah, J., & Laszlo, C. (2022). Creating positive impact: The power of greater purpose and consciousness of connectedness. *Engaged Management Review, 5*(1), 2.

Longman, K. A., Chang, H., & Loyd-Paige, M. (2015). Self-analytical, community building, and empowering: Collaborative autoethnography of leaders of color in higher education. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research, 9*, 268–285.

Meadows, D. (1999). *Leverage points: Places to intervene in a system*. http://leadership-for-change.southernafricatrust.org/downloads/session_2_module_2/Leverage-Points-Places-to-Intervene-in-a-System.pdf

Metz, T., & Gaie, J. B. R. (2010). The African ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for research on morality. *Journal of Moral Education, 39*(3), 273–290. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2010.497609

Miller, B., & Pinto, M. (2013). *Epistemic equality*. Available at SSRN https://ssrn.com/abstract=2365541 or http://dx.doi.org/10/2139/ssrn.2365541

Ngunjiri, F. W., Hernandez, K. C., & Chang, H. (2010). Living autoethnography: Connecting life and research. *Journal of Research Practice, 6*(1), Article E1. Retrieved April 30, 2021, from http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/241/186

Ray, V. (2019). A theory of racialized organization. *American Sociological Review, 84*(1), 26–53.

Sartre, J., & Frechtman, B. (1947). *Existentialism*. Philosophical Library.

Scharmer, C. O. (2012). *Theory u*. Readhowyouwant Com Ltd.

Thau, M. (2002). *Consciousness and cognition*. Oxford University Press.

Thayer-Bacon, B. (2010). A pragmatist and feminist relational (E)pistemology. *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* [Online], II-1. Retrieved April 20, 2019 from http://journals.openedition.org/ejpap/948

Thayer-Bacon, B. (2017). *Relational ontologies*. Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

The Kilpisjärvi Collective, Atkinson, S., Brives, C., Cañada, J. A., Kinnunen, V., & Oinas, E. (2021). Introducing with microbes: From witnessing to withnessing. In C. Brives, M. Rest, & S. Sariola (Eds.), *With microbes* (pp. 17–40). Mattering Press. https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/62t34

Thurman, R. A. (2008). *Ontology of consciousness: Percipient action*. MIT Press.

Tsao, F. C., & Laszlo, C. (2019). *Quantum leadership: New consciousness in business*. Stanford University Press.

Vagle, M. (2018). *Crafting phenomenological research*. Routledge.

Vella, J. (2016). The power of dialogue in adult learning. *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry., 36*, 95–101.

Van Gogh, V. (1880). *Letter from Vincent Van Gogh to Theo, 1880*. Retrieved from https://quotepark.com/quotes/1219393-vincent-van-gogh-the-best-way-to-know-life-is-to-love-many-things/

Waddock, S. (2020). Reframing and transforming economics around life. *Sustainability, 12*(18), 7553.
Wall Kimmerer, R. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teachings of plants*. Milkweed.
Weinreich, P. (1986). The operationalisation of identity theory in racial and ethnic relations. In J. Rex & D. Mason (Eds.), *Theories of race and ethnic relations*. Cambridge University Press.
Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Pub.

CHAPTER 14

Sustainable Flourishing in Cities and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems: Developing a Path Through Appreciative Inquiry and SOAR Framework for Increasing Innovative Capacity and Resilience

Larry Clay Jr

Introduction

Developing cities as sustainable and flourishing ecosystems is one of the greatest societal challenges of our time because it will require complementary actions by governments, academia, civil society, science, and business (Cooperrider & McQuaid, 2012; Sachs et al., 2019). Macromanagement has been viewed as a viable means for an integrative systems management approach in achieving cities' sustainable development goals along with societal flourishing. More specifically, Appreciative Inquiry summits and

L. Clay Jr (✉)
Marymount University, Arlington, VA, USA
e-mail: larry.clay@humanitysteam.org

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_14

platforms as systems management strategies have been touted as a macro-management approach for the whole system, strengths-based approaches that are instrumental for macro-level processing such as organizational systems, communities, and city ecosystem (Cooperrider et al., 2008; McQuaid, 2019; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Cooperrider and McQuaid (2012) describe Appreciative Inquiry summits as,

> …large group planning, designing, or implementation meeting that brings a 'whole system' of 300 to 1,000 or more internal and external stakeholders together in a concentrated way to work on a task of strategic, and especially creative, value [and] ...where everyone is engaged as a designer, across all relevant and resource-rich boundaries, to share leadership and take ownership for making the future of some big league opportunity successful. (p. 2)

However, empirically macromanagement and Appreciative Inquiry (AI) platforms have been described mostly in abstract concepts in frameworks of strengths-based, future and positive focused, while also being a distinct contrast to traditional micromanagement.

Macromanagement and AI are associated with systematic flourishing outcomes (McQuaid, 2019), bringing out the best in human systems (Cooperrrider, 2012). They offer communication strategies for practitioner co-creation towards deeper meanings and identities of power through conversations (Whitney, 2012), generating positive action for large-scale learning, transformation, and social innovation (Whitney et al., 2019), and transforming urban environments (Rosado, 2008; Sachs et al., 2019). However, macromanagement has been criticized as being too broad and poorly defined a concept to draw any meaning, and the criticism is echoed by what is meant by AI. Moreover, critics of AI have argued that it has limited perspectives focusing only on the "positivity" that foster unrealistic views of human experiences (MacCoy, 2014), and the process has tendencies to polarize "negative" and "positive" aspects of phenomena (Bushe, 2012). But as the empirical evidence evolved over the last few decades, the confusion and inconsistencies about AI have been somewhat resolved; especially, since the emergence of the SOAR framework with the feature of "language" flipping problems into opportunities (Cooperrrider, 2012; Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009).

The SOAR framework is a strategy formulation and planning framework that allows organizations and systems to think, plan, and inspire

implementation towards the most preferred future (Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009). Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results are the elements that represent the acronym of the SOAR framework. Instead of the analytical strategic framework established as Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT), SOAR acknowledges a holistic perspective of present and future timeframes with internalized and externalized scopes between humans and their environments for change management. In doing so, leaders and managers approach and analyze change management with positive foci on strengths and opportunities, instead of focusing on weaknesses and threats in strategic analyses. The strengths-based, positive focus on change encourages generative dialogue that motivates management and participants towards the development of positive aspirational goals. The strengths-based approach inspires all participants to implement and act on achieving shared visions and goals for positive outcomes and results. This is a stark contrast from classical change management problem-solving by narrow reductive reasoning and approaching change as recursive responses to weaknesses and threats. As Cooperrrider (2012) argued, "No accumulation of simply fixing weakness and reacting to threats in the environment will transform a person, organization, nor system; only by amplifying strengths will they excel towards full-spectrum flourishing" (2012: Executive Summary pp. ii–iii).

The SOAR framework has been studied as an effective strategic process in planning urban tourism development (Khavarian-Garmsir & Zare, 2015), for encouraging collaborative capacities in teams (Cole et al., 2019), and leading change management for sustainable performance (Glovis et al., 2014). In combination with motivation, the SOAR framework has also been discovered to enable organizational flow for better performance outcomes in entrepreneurial endeavors (Stavros & Saint, 2010).

We posit that the SOAR framework combined with the AI platform enables ecosystem-level implementation towards sustainable development performance. They are also effective strategic tools for social construction planning and development for community development and social equity goal attainment. However, we preface this under the assumption that ecosystem leadership and community members employ the AI platform and SOAR framework as the primary social organizing tool within the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and the meta-organizational development of UN 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) achievement (Berkowitz, 2018; Glavas et al., 2010; Sachs et al., 2019). The

overarching expected outcomes of this strategic approach is to shift the conscious mindset of the community through empowerment and inclusive activities of idea generation for social impact, community value appreciation (growth), and full spectrum humanistic flourishing.

In this study we combine AI with the SOAR analysis, with the conceptual understanding that AI is the "system" and SOAR is the "processor" of a macromanagement approach. Although the literature is robust about the effectiveness of change management associated with AI-SOAR as it relates to organizational or whole systems flourishing, there is an opportunity to propose a model of AI-SOAR effectiveness towards flourishing on the ecosystem level. To help leaders, business and institutional managers, and all other stakeholders in operationalizing a macromanagement approach to foster sustainable innovation and build resiliency, we offer a measurable model by conceptualizing, operationalizing, and measuring AI-SOAR effects on a city ecosystem. Operationalized, AI-SOAR as a platform would enable stakeholders and organizations to organize, make collective decisions, orchestrate resources, co-design, and integrate implementation for developing innovation while simultaneously building resilience for a flourishing city ecosystem. This is the first objective of this study. The second objective of this study is to identify an underpinning effect between innovation and resilience which has been argued by Dale et al. (2010) as the adaptive interaction that grows and maintains the flourishing community or ecosystem. Thus, our research question is…

> What characteristics of Appreciative Inquiry and SOAR framework leads to increases in innovative capacity and resilience in city ecosystems, which also influences the transformation towards cities as sustainable ecosystem?

Our proposed model was analyzed and tested using structural equation modeling to show that the macromanagement approach functioning as AI-SOAR platform summits result in positive performance and outcomes in ecosystem innovation and resiliency, which develops the city ecosystems' form towards a flourishing CASE. After presenting our results, we will deliberate on the findings and discuss the implications of extending the scholarship in the macromanagement and AI-SOAR literature; and offer utility of this instrument to management in practice.

Theoretical Framework

Building Innovative Capacity and Resilience by Macromanagement

Evolved from Meadows' (1997) systems management strategy, McFarland's (1977) social pluralism in institutions, and Srivastiva's & Cooperrider's (1987) whole systems management, the macromanagement approach extends decision-making capabilities from core leadership and is inclusive of internal, external, and future stakeholders pertinent to the ecosystem (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). It is a multi-stakeholder process, which is defined as value creation processes or approaches that are designed to foster inclusiveness and decentralize control through polycentric governance for one or multiple goals that involve multiple stakeholders in a group, organization, city ecosystem, or ecosystem. The macromanagement self-organizing system combines top-down dynamic capabilities, which are considered the strengths of organized systems with their technical competencies; and bottom-up dynamic capabilities bring distinctive strengths of local knowledge, inspiration, and aspiration. Collectively, the combination of both strengths has the potential of creating exponential innovative power and building resiliency within CASEs.

Beyond the property of integrating collective action, there are two other distinct properties of macromanagement that attributes to its uniqueness compared to other organizational systems approaches. First, embedded in macromanagement is a positive focus on the "whole" drawn by open communication and generative crowdsourcing of everything positive, strengths, and ideas of organizations and systems. For example, during planning and strategizing for system change, the knowledge sharing of information and idea generation would have a positive perspective, design, and conversations around certain meanings and identifications of resources, leadership capabilities, stakeholder needs, and opportunities for change. This means that instead of strategic planning from problems and their emergent negative consequences being approached with reductionist strategies; conversations in strategic planning would focus on positivity and invert the contextual meaning of a particular problem, into an opportunity to innovate positive change (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Roepke & Seligman, 2015).

The second property of macromanagement is prospection. Prospection is the capability of being future-focused driven by optimism. Combined with a positive outlook, prospection serves as a mechanism for leaders,

managers, and other stakeholders to think by optimism and forwardly productive management; and this way of thinking and doing exerts an optimistic future-focused controllability within social environments (Na et al., 2019). In contrast, backwardness thinking and management with pessimistic outlooks of social environments have languished stakeholders' controllability and capabilities associated with negative effects and senses of hopelessness and helplessness in social environments (Maier & Seligman, 2016; Seligman et al., 2013). This insight of prospection has been studied in social environments, such as city ecosystems, and has been found to be an instrumental social managerial capability when assessing and implementing public policy for socioeconomic well-being indicators (Adler & Seligman, 2016; Roepke & Seligman, 2015). The macromanagement meta-epistemological elements of wholeness (vertical and horizontal polycentric action) with a positive future-focused approach and outlook is the essential management strategy for multi-stakeholder processes and integrative management for the developmental goal of CASE.

This third management organizing form has emerged with a significant number of leaders and stakeholders that think small reconfigurations have the potential to produce large systematic changes (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2013); and where a small shift or innovation in one thing can produce big changes in everything (Meadows, 1997). Meadows' small shift approach to systemic change relies on managerial hierarchic organizing form and stakeholders' local competencies and capabilities to recognize major leverage points of the system and move that leverage point in the right direction. Innovation is widely considered to hold the keys for whole systems sustainability, but particularly in cities, communities, and ecosystems (Berkowitz & Dumez, 2016; Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013; Cassiolato et al., 2014; Henrekson, 2014; Macharis & Kin, 2017; Schaefer et al., 2015). Some empirical research suggests that stakeholder engagement for systems-level sustainable innovation is achievable through its core leaderships' understanding of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of the stakeholder engagement (Jonas et al., 2018). Moreover, other scholars complement this notion of inclusive innovation by articulating that designing the appropriate configuration and aligning capabilities of stakeholders for city ecosystem and systems development is essential to achieving sustainable innovations (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Gulati et al., 2012),

understanding how stakeholders in open-systems practices are empowered towards organizational effectiveness (Kirkman et al., 2011), and by following the generative guiding principles and processes of organizing for sustainability-driven innovation (Parrish, 2010). The macromanagement objective is not intended to diminish key top management and decision-maker stakeholders' nor an organization's power; rather, the intention is for key management leaders and participating stakeholders to create network environments and platforms that promote inclusiveness by unlocking the greatest collective humanistic potential of ingenuity; which complexity theory informs us, that it can emerge from anyone anywhere (Mitchell, 2009).

Underlying this systems-level organizational design task is the adaptive learning processes involving skillful but imperfect rational agents and organizations (Holm et al., 2010), and the diversity of stakeholders with informal and indigenous knowledge. Under this assumption the diversity of organizations, institutions, and stakeholders within the city have untapped capabilities to enhance their individual competencies through searching and learning; and the systematic capacity building occurs in interactions between systems' stakeholders. What emerges because of this self-organizing systems approach develops into organizational gestalts of flourishing within the CASE. Gestalt in ecosystem designing is the organizing capability to approach a design task or inquiry creatively, individually, and collectively—yet maintain unity across the varying design outcomes (Yoo et al., 2006). This simultaneous co-existence of unity and variety reflects benefits for the whole outcome in the form of innovation and new competencies recognized by stakeholders, organizations, institutions, and other subsystems from the innovative design and learning processes. The design gestalt is understood, as it relates to ecosystem development, as a "virtual" capability that combines ideas, values, resources, tools, and stakeholders into ensembles that can create and project remarkable multi-beneficial artifacts (Yoo et al., 2006). By form, characteristics, or a combination of both, these artifacts are produced as representations of the organizing structures that designed them.

Resilience and the supporting theory emerged from scholarly discourse on general systems theory and has been studied in disciplines such as ecology, psychology, engineering, and sociology (Boschma, 2015). Resilience is defined as the capacity of a system to undergo change and still retain its basic function and structure (Folke et al., 2010). As it relates

to sustainability, resilience can be defined as the ability of organizations, communities, and systems to cope with external stresses and disturbances from social, political, economic, institutional, and environmental change. Evolutionary systems resilience, in particular, suggests that all systems are in a constant state of adaptation within an ever-flowing field of change (Davoudi et al., 2012; Simmie & Martin, 2010). In the context of ecosystems resilience is constructed from the panarchic systems' dynamic capabilities of risk anticipation, reflexivity (adaptive learning), and responsiveness to perturbation. It is dependent on the resource accessibility; the diversity of stakeholders, leadership, education, and economies; the trust, cooperation, and coordination within stakeholders' engagements; and how stakeholders' decision-making adapts to perturbation, adversity, uncertainty, and conflict.

Empirical studies in management have proved several key factors that build resiliency, and a few are stakeholder relationships of openness, transparency, and trust; connectivity of people and resources; with a continuity and stability within the dynamics of the city ecosystem that are reactive (flexible) and anticipatory (risk planned) (Bec et al., 2019; Dale et al., 2010). A diversity of capacity building, synthesizing stakeholder capabilities, and adaptive capacities to perturbations—or the emergences of deviations from system norms—can influence the robustness of resilience building (Dale et al., 2010). Bec et al. (2019) added to Dale's expressing that resource accessibility, diversifications of stakeholders, adaptive capacities capabilities in continuity, the right "mix" of high-quality leadership (clout), informal leadership that builds (trust), and engaging peripheral stakeholders that have competing institutional logics can connect and build systems resiliency through cooperation.

Although scholars have developed the key factors leading towards sustainable innovation and resiliency, a social structuring and integrative process that describes a "how to" achieve a flourishing ecosystem on the scale of a city is less developed. The functionality of AI-SOAR offers the operationalized integrative systems management and social structuring that yields positive impacts from co-collaborative efforts towards the creativity and resiliency desired to be achieved. AI-SOAR is macro-managing complex systems, or in ecosystems language a living system affecting a higher order living system. It is important to note that city-level sustainable development achievement should not be viewed as a linear pathway to a sustainability goal, but its nonlinear nature requires the integral tasks to be viewed as a change-stability balance-seeking

temporal process where a mass humanistic flourishing state can emerge (Kemp & Loorbach, 2003).

Operating the System and Process of Appreciative Inquiry and the SOAR Framework

The application of AI summits and platforms has emphasized the concept of positive potential—the best or what has been, what is, and what might be. AI is a multi-stakeholder process for stimulating social, ecological, and economic positive change (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) that reframes traditional managerial problems with a salutogenic approach to team, group, organizational, and systematic vitality. Centered around five key principles, the philosophy of AI is grounded on the macro-management's ability to create change with generative inquiry, amplify organizational strengths, harness the transformative power of the "positivity ratio" with small positive systematic shifts, imagine in wholeness "what is best", and develop a wider lens of what is to be appreciated or valued (Cooperrider & McQuaid, 2012).

The challenges of operationalizing AI may, at first, seem too complex to manage for achieving CASE innovative performance and resiliency, contrarily it doesn't. Some of our problems require only small systemic innovations or levers, which enable the fulfillment of needs in an entirely new manner. Yet, planning is difficult when things useful to us today may be of no use in the future and things we do not value may be essential to humans living in the future. AI platforms are instrumental in creating a system where innovation can emerge from everywhere as we look to increase sustainable value in CASE. Stakeholders within CASE absorb creative potential energies by developing design-inspired collaborative multi-stakeholder tasks. Although it is not necessary for every single stakeholder in the city or ecosystem to participate; it is highly encouraged to integrate the collaborative capacity of multi-disciplinary groups in practice and interest, as well as representation from diverse sets of city ecosystem settings within a CASE—including situations of competing institutional logics. Strategic innovation is the result of bringing a diverse set of voices into the strategy dialogue, among other issues (Hamel, 1998). Dalton and Dalton echo this finding that minority opinions stimulate creativity and divergent thought which, through their participation, can manifest as innovation. The utilization of big data, social media, and online groups have all contributed to nascent emergences through social structuring and

positive action. The digitalization of data mining, and social organizing systems by social movements have facilitated the extension of stakeholder engagement aiding in the discovery of innovative solutions beneficial to communities and cities through the network of peripheral stakeholders from other organizations, communities, systems, or other CASE (Burt, 1992; Steele, 2017).

As AI is applied, macro-managers utilize the 6-D cycle with generative questions designed to activate the interdependent design task of stakeholders. These macro-managers start by pre-framing a powerful interdependent task with a purpose much larger than the system. Applying the term task assumes actions to be taken, dissimilar to a mission statement that often represents a static state of intent in collaboration. The key question in pre-framing the interdependent task is, "what do we want to create, not what do we want to solve or avoid?" (Cooperrider & Laszlo, 2012). This interdependent task in CASE flourishing context can be an important opportunity that designs the task from those key questions and has potential implications on all diverse sets of stakeholders within the system. After the powerful task is established by key asset orchestrators, the next phase of the 6-D cycle is the "Discovery" (tasked with appreciating in value "what is") next is the "Dream" phase (imaginative or envisioning the future stage), followed by the "Design" phase (Co-creating the dream), and the "Destiny" phase (empowering, adaptive learning, and sustaining stage) (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The last phase of the 6-D cycle is the drum, the temporal frequency of convening AI summits and platforms. This can be understood as the number of times stakeholders in an ecosystem meet to plan and strategize for future improvements, but also to evaluate prior results from previous summits and determine if further adaptations are needed in the ecosystem. The drum represents the point where stakeholders should monitor and evaluate the continuous improvement process of the ecosystem, and the point to assess the volume of members that participate in AI platforms to track individual well-being changes towards flourishing principles such as with the PERMA framework (Cooperrider & McQuaid, 2012; Seligman, 2012), and other well-being and happiness measurements (Forgeard et al., 2011). AI invites people to engage in a shared dialogue about positive images and affirmations to create new and alternative possibilities in their communities and cities. Macro-managers facilitate shared dialogue among stakeholders in an organization or city ecosystem that focuses on

what works well, rather than what is not working well or details to deficiencies (D. Whitney & Fredrickson, 2015). The shared dialogue occurs through AI-based conversations about gaps, possibilities, and a desired future (Bushe, 2007; Stavros et al., 2018).

Macromanagement applied as AI brings out the best in human social systems, reaching across resource-rich boundaries sharing leadership and ownership of an interdependent task giving a sense of empowerment, and resulting in more effective collaborative efforts to appreciating—in a duel meaning of valuing and accumulating value—creativity and resilience in CASE. Unlike traditional system-wide transformative efforts that execute strategies within isolated silos, departments, or organizations, AI operationalizes collective stakeholders' smart-power by designing creation tasks from modularity, configurations, combinations, and interfaces with systematic acceleration and scaling up solutions (Cooperrider & Zhexembayeva, 2013). The concentration of effects that emerge from AI participation spreads throughout the system causing dissipative effects of systematic resiliency and innovation. This effect is also aligned with Holling (2001) and Simon (1996) explanation of an adaptive system as it relates to the significance of hierarchal structures, their effects on the higher-ordered structures, and the dynamic functionality that shape both sub-system and ecosystem.

The Strengths, Opportunity, Aspiration, Results SOAR framework has its origins within the AI practitioner and academic scholarship; and the framework shares AI's five principles with underlying values of positive psychology, dialogic communication, generative conversations, and generative results (Bushe, 2013; Bushe & Paranjpey, 2015; Maxton & Bushe, 2018; McClellan, 2007; Stavros et al., 2018; D. Whitney & Fredrickson, 2015). The SOAR profile measures both AI and the four elements of SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspiration, and Results). The framework integrates positive psychology and AI through its focus on positive deviance (i.e., moving towards positive energy and away from negative energy), its encouragement of possibility thinking through generative conversations, and the formulation and implementation of a positive strategy by identifying strengths, building creativity in the form of opportunities, encouraging various stakeholders to share aspirations, and determining measurable and meaningful results (Cameron et al., 2003; Cameron & Spritzer, 2011; Stavros et al., 2007). It is assumed multi-stakeholders are part of the collaborative effort and all stakeholders are represented as the ecosystems' integrative management strategy. SOAR

builds positive psychological capacity by using dialogue and generative conversations to transform strategic thinking, planning, and leading (Cole & Stavros, 2019). Through its focus on positive deviance, SOAR integrates the philosophies of AI and positive psychology by framing strategy as a set of processes that enable collective resourcefulness and generative dynamics that lead to positive states or outcomes (Fredrickson et al., 2008). Starting the SOAR process first focuses on finding and inquiring *strengths*, or assets already in possession of an ecosystem. These assets include natural, financial, human, knowledge, tangible, intangible, and other resources available to the ecosystem. The next step sets the precedents of imaging opportunities and visualizing collectively desired outcomes. The *opportunities* step is a critical deviance from traditional intervening strategies that problematize. Instead of a perspective of negativity, weaknesses, deficiencies, and threats; stakeholders can flip problems into opportunities. For example, instead of framing the wicked problems of joblessness and affordable housing; participating stakeholders can generate dialogue around the opportunity and reorganize their thoughts and assets towards envisioning new job possibilities and co-creating the values of accessing housing based on the essential and desired needs of stakeholders. This leads to the next step of *aspiration* that establishes the tactical functional plans and couples them with strategic initiatives to integrate programs that function to reach the planned future outcome. And lastly, the *results* step is the actional step that inspires stakeholders to implement and achieve the desired outcomes. An illustration of this SOAR framework process flow is Fig. 14.1.

AI and SOAR in the context of CASE's collaborative capacity building, can be best described as the combination of organizational structure and organizational structure functional process (Herrmann et al., 2004). Starting the operation of AI platform, CASE's hierarchal organizing form structures architects, developers, and managers as holding power, leadership, and relative resources. The collaboration and processes within the SOAR process are intended to be inclusive by the representation of diverse social classes, social cognitions, genders, business scales, institutions, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds within the ecosystem. It is also critical for the organizational structure to have participating stakeholders from the Base of the Pyramid (Cañeque & Hart, 2017) to asset orchestrating management scattered towards the top. It is the presence of diversity as well as the collaborative effort, regardless of the interdependent task created by orchestrating management; if the positive actionable

Fig. 14.1 The SOAR framework[1]

task at its core is planned accordingly in the design method of AI, the execution of the process during an AI Summit should yield positive emergences of innovative ideas or capacities that can benefit the CASE co-creating a thriving city ecosystem vitality. Therefore, our assumption that the operating system and process of AI-SOAR leads to an increase of innovative capacities among participating stakeholders, which in turn, also stimulates the robustness for resilience within the ecosystem to support a flourishing city ecosystem vitality.

thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: Applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach increases innovative capacity towards a flourishing city ecosystem vitality.

Hypothesis 2: Applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach increases resiliency towards a robust city ecosystem vitality.

Tethering from Dale et al. (2010), we echo the same assumption in reference to flourishing city ecosystem (CASE) vitality and underpinning relationship between innovation and resilience. They claim there are dynamic capabilities occurring between the two. One dynamism through

[1] Adopted from (Cole & Stavros, 2019). Source: www.soar-strategy.com.

building resilience and the other dynamism of building innovative capacities; and when combined emerges a flourishing ecosystem. We understood the use of the word "dynamism" had meaning related to the energy, action, process, and forces that move by path or trajectory; usually, in a nonlinear way. Interpreting dynamism within this framing we understand this dual effect as causal forces within the whole system, where the sub-ecosystems of innovation have a positive influence on the sub-ecosystems of resiliency, and vice versa, in a symbiotic relationship. The macromanagement system and process AI-SOAR has the potential to facilitate the transformation within the whole system and dissipate throughout the ecosystem. The AI-SOAR macromanagement system relies on humanistic capabilities of collective planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating by a design protocol that promotes a social constructing—with a positive bias—to affect all panarchic subsystems including social systems. Through positive framing, open communication, and focusing on shareholder needs and innovative solutions that are both generative and builds meaningful collaborative relationships, we pose the AI-SOAR management system as the driver that enables the capacity growth for innovation and a robust response of resilience. Since we propose that the combination of AI-SOAR is an antecedent to increasing the city ecosystem vitality, we also posit that there is a double mediating effect of building resiliency and innovative capacity. Moreover, we theorize that one has a positive influence on the other; and consequently, results in the dissipative emergence of flourishing CASE vitality (Dale et al., 2016). Therefore, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Innovation capacity increases the effectiveness between applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach and resiliency towards a robust city ecosystem vitality.

Hypothesis 4: Building resilience increases the robustness between applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach and innovation capacity towards a flourishing city ecosystem vitality.

For this study we included the controls of Appreciative Inquiry experience (AIEXP), Ethnicity (ETHNIC), perceived organizational performance (ORGPRFM), and city ecosystem role (COMMROL) into this model. We controlled for AIEXP to observe if there was a significant difference in responses between participants that have experienced or have a competency of AI. ETHNIC and COMMROL were included to observe a significant difference among various ethnic groups, and active roles in their city ecosystem. Lastly, ORGPRFM was integrated into the

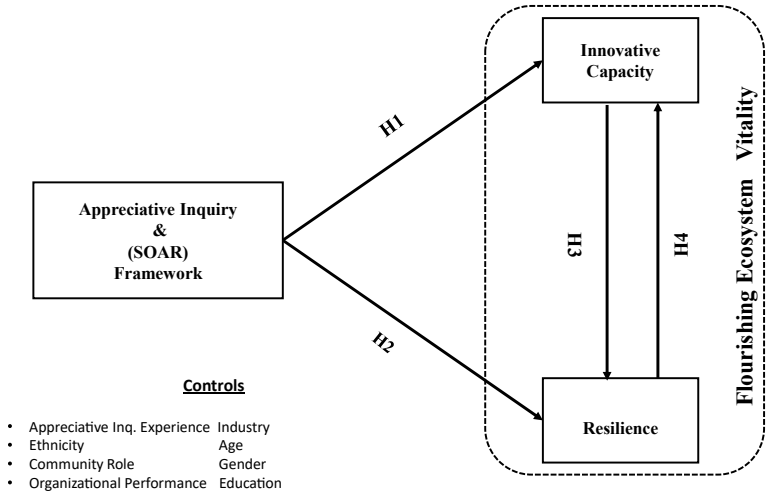


Fig. 14.2 Hypothesized model

model to observe if there were significant differences in responses due to participants' perception of their city ecosystem's performance. Below, we offer the hypothesized model (Fig. 14.2) that we constructed from the theoretic framing and followed to test our hypotheses supporting our claims.

Research Design

Sample

The data were obtained as part of a new study on ecosystems-level strategies towards flourishing, which draw upon various stakeholders in cities and communities for increased degrees of self-organizing, inclusion, innovation, and capacity-building efforts. During the study, we measured individual's responses of AI and SOAR as reported on "other participants" in the community. We measured participants' ratings of creativity and resilience of others within the community. The survey instrument was slightly modified from the AI and SOAR survey instrument of Cole et al. (2019) to reflect items describing another focal person's behavior rather than their own behavior. Respondents rating someone else, such as their

leader, or someone else whom the respondent is familiar, may perceive traits and competencies in others better than ratings the individual makes in him or herself (Libbrecht et al., 2010; Van der Zee et al., 2002).

We developed our demographic requirements to be inclusive of various types of categorical stakeholders that are relevant to the boundaries of a city and range from top-level formal management leadership to active volunteers. Survey items were also added to collect and identify the diversity of stakeholders, by formal and informal arrangement, geographic location, age, and gender, as well as level of station and community outreach, specific tasks assigned, and education. Detailed illustrations of individual demographic characteristics can be found in Appendix B.

Procedures

The subject sample population was collected and developed through the co-investigator's past experiences in several professional organizations and the professional network as a business consultant in sustainability. Three waves of email distributions were performed, with a total of 500 emails disseminated to prospective professionals within the network. We also disseminated the survey through social media outlets such as Facebook, and LinkedIn to reach the participants in the co-investigator's network. This method invited over 10,000 samples within the professional network to participate in the survey. Consent forms were embedded within the Qualtrics platform and collected before the online survey was initiated. A total of 44 samples were collected during this phase of sample collection. Subsequentially, the challenges of voluntary survey participation through the researcher's network were found inadequate in accumulating enough samples to reach a significant sample effect. Therefore, the researcher utilized MTurks to drive the sample count and reach a significant sample effect necessary to test the model. And as a result, we collected 44 panel samples from the researcher's professional network and purchased 300 panel data samples for a total of 344 samples within the targeted demographics. Of the 344 individuals who opted to participate, three subsequently were missing data, incomplete, or unusable; hence, a total of 341 participants responded for a 3% aggregated response rate.

Using SPSS, we analyzed our data to produce data frequencies and descriptive statistics, then computed a syntax in MPLUS to perform a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The CFA was performed as an assessment and output of confirming the measurement model, determining

model fit, convergent and discriminant validity, composite reliability, factor correlation matrix, structural equation modeling SEM, and testing mediating effects.

Measures

Resilience (RES) Resiliency was measured with an eighteen-item scale and asked during the survey. The eighteen-item scale was adopted from Bec et al. (2019), and these performance indicators of resilience formed from the four-dimensional concepts of *Resource Accessibility; Diversity; Clout, Trust, and Cooperation; and Capabilities, Coordination, and Continuity*. CASE resilience can be defined as a positive psychological system capacity to rebound, to "bounce back" from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or other perturbations. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate of this scale was 0.84.

Innovative Capacity IC Innovative capacity, or creative capacity, was measured with a fourteen-item scale, and adopted from George and Zhou (2001), Scott and Bruce (1994). Innovative capacity, also understood as creative performance, was defined as the managing of creativity and innovation outcomes through stakeholders' cognitive energy, reward, recognition, and objective satisfaction. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate of this scale was 0.81.

Appreciative Inquiry AI Appreciative Inquiry was measured with a six-item scale adopted from Cole and Stavros (2019). AI is defined as a whole systems strategy model to strategic thinking, planning, and leading to positive change for the whole. The AI model focuses on strengths and opportunities instead of weaknesses and problematic issues for system-level solutions. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate of this scale was 0.86.

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results Framework SOAR The SOAR framework was measured with a thirteen-item sub-scale formed from four-dimensional concepts: (1) Strengths, (2) Opportunities, (3) Aspirations, and (4) Results. The scale was adopted from Cole et al. (2019). SOAR is defined as a strengths-based framework with a participatory approach to strategic analysis, strategy development, and organizational change. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate of this scale was 0.83. Table 14.1 displays the survey instrument that was

Table 14.1 Survey constructs and indicators

SOAR towards sustainable innovation and resilience survey indicators			
Variable	*Items*	*Type*	*Citation*
Strength, opportunities, aspirations, and results framework SOAR	13	Reflective	Cole et al. (2018) and Cole and Stavros (2019)
Appreciative Inquiry AI	6	Reflective	Cole et al. (2017)
Resilience (RES)	18	Reflective	Bec et al. (2019)
Creativity (CR)	14	Reflective	Scott and Bruce (1994) and George and Zhou (2001)

developed with the number of indicators and citations. A copy of the constructed table can be found in Appendix A.

Analyses

We utilized SPSS to assess the measurement model. First, we analyzed the sample data by descriptive statistics and dimension reduction computation. We set the factor statistics to report KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity as well as a reproduced correlation matrix. Method of extraction was set to Maximum Likelihood (ML) to analyze the correlation matrix, then setting the extraction based on Eigenvalues greater than one. We also set the extraction rotation to Promax and suppressed small coefficients to 0.3 to examine the factor structure and executed the analysis. Subsequently, we adjusted the Kaiser Normalization value in several iterations to perform the extractions with a fixed number of factors at three, four, five, six, and seven. This method was used to maximize differences between factors and provides a model fit in the estimate at a fixed factor of four (Hair et al., 2019) representing our four latent variables. After running these analyses, we reviewed the KMO and Bartlett's Test results, communalities, total variance explained, and best converging loadings pattern matrix. which can be found in Appendix. The KMO and Bartlett statistical value was 0.97, which is greater than 0.70 and meets the threshold of acceptability (Matsunaga, 2010). After reviewing the communalities, we found no item loadings lower than 0.450 and 0.488, indicating that beyond these two measurement items we have minimal concerns with any factor loadings <0.500, which is an acceptable

threshold. There were no significant cross-loading factors found in the pattern matrix, nor were there any cross-loadings with a value difference <0.20 across unobserved variables. The Cronbach's α for each unobserved variable was calculated, and all resulted in values greater than 0.7, AI-SOAR 0.962, RES 0.904, IC 0.795; thus, confirming the reliability of this measurement model. Correlation results between the unobserved variables can be found in Appendix E. These unstandardized results reveal AI-SOAR-IC 0.680, AI-SOAR-RES 0.732, IC-RES 0.744. These factor correlation values also raise concerns, as all are >0.70, and may become problematic to establish both discriminant and convergent validity of the measurement model.

For the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) we continued our assessment of convergent and discriminant validity, composite reliability, the factor correlation matrix, goodness of fit, SEM, and mediating effects in MPLUS. The CFA syntax in MPLUS was computed to compare our results of the descriptive statistics and factor analysis and to confirm similarities between SPSS and MPLUS results. Extraction method was defaulted using maximum likelihood as the estimator along with a GEOMIN rotation. Result outputs were similar in value between SPSS and MPLUS, and the three factors measurement model revealed the best fit, convergent validity, and reliability. The goodness of fit indices can be reviewed in Table 14.2.

All goodness of fit indices: $x^2/\mathrm{df} = 2.039$, TLI = 0.896, CFI = 0.903, RMSEA = 0.055, SRMR = 0.039 meets the acceptable requirements and

Table 14.2 Model fit indices

Measure	*Threshold*	*Final model*	*Acceptable threshold?*	*Citation*
CMIN	–	1912.9	–	–
dF	–	971	–	–
CMIN/dF	<3	1.970	Good	Byrne (2016) and Hair et al. (2019)
p-value	>0.05	0	Good	Byrne (2016)
RMSEA	<0.08	0.053	Good	Hu and Bentler (1999)
SRMR	<0.09	0.038	Good	Hu and Bentler (1999)
TLI	>0.90	0.914	Acceptable	McDonald and Marsh (1990)
CFI	>0.90	0.910	Acceptable	Hu and Bentler (1999)

Table 14.3 Factor correlation, CR, AVE, & MSV results

Factor	*CR*	*AVE*	*MSV*	*AI-SOAR*	*Innovative capacity*	*Resilience*
AI-SOAR	0.962	0.567	0.663	0.753		
Innovative capacity	0.959	0.629	0.723	0.745**	0.793	
Resilience	0.935	0.492	0.585	0.788**	0.823**	0.670

indicates this measurement model has a good fit (Byrne, 2004; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; McDonald & Marsh, 1990; Podsakoff et al., 2012). The factor correlation was developed and integrated into a table with composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Maximum Shared Variance (MSV). The CR and AVE were calculated in the CFA, and MSV was calculated in MS Excel from extracted CFA output results. Table 14.3 displays the results of the factor correlation, CR, AVE, and MSV.

As displayed, CR values for AI-SOAR = 0.962, IC = 0.959, and RES = 0.935 affirm reliability with all factors greater than 0.7. The reliability values from the EFA (Cronbach's a) and CFA (CR) confirm reliability; moreover, many method scholars consider CR values closer to "true" reliability of measurement (Peterson & Kim, 2013) and consider it a stronger indicator for reliability. The AVE values for AI-SOAR = 0.567 and IC = 0.629 revealed convergent validity, having values greater than 0.500; but the initial RES = 0.449 resulted as being problematic and under the <0.500 threshold for convergent validity. Our options to mitigate the model results with the goal of achieving discriminant and convergent validity with all variables was to review the Modification Indices (M.I.) and identify problematic observed variables and residuals. After reviewing MI, we determined that resilience items RES1-RES4, and RES7 were consistently observed as problematic from our analyses. Although it is unrecommended to covary error terms, or remove observed variables, we made the decision to remove these items; justly, to achieve discriminant and convergent validity with the three factors in the measurement model and was close to achieving discriminate validity with AVE values >0.500 for all factors: AI-SOAR = 0.567 and IC = 0.629, and RES = 0.492 as displayed in the table above. The RES result was considered close to the acceptable threshold (Hair et al., 2019) trending towards convergent validity. The MSV results for AI-SOAR = 0.663, IC = 0.723, and RES = 0.585. This informed us of the maximum of the variance shared

between that factor and the other factors which it shares variance (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, it is recommended that AVE is greater than MSV for discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019). All MSV values were greater than AVE which indicated no discriminant validity between the variables. However, we made the decision of a good model fit over attaining discriminant validity based on the Malhotra et al. (2012) argument that AVE is often too strict and recommends that reliability metrics can be established through CR alone. We do advise to view further outcomes, results, and claims with caution (Hair et al., 2019). We were marginally close to achieving discriminant validity; though items were removed from the survey to strengthen the goodness of fit, validity, and reliability of the measurement model.

Direct effects were tested to determine the causal relationship between AI-SOAR with IC and RES respectively. The direct effects were hypothesized by H1 and H2. Mediating effects were tested using the Preacher and Hayes approach (Muthén, 2011; Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The mediation variables IC and RES in hypothesis H3 and H4 were analyzed using 2000 bias-corrected bootstrapping resamples in MPLUS. We created the syntax for our model to produce direct and specific indirect mediating effects, including controls, along with the confidence intervals bias corrected two-tailed with 95% level of confidence. From the MPLUS output, we reviewed the β-weights and significance levels of the direct and specific indirect relationships between the variables in the causal model.

Results

The sample respondents were 55.4% male, 43.7% female, 0.6% non-binary; and age 90.3% were predominately between the range of 23–57 years old. The greatest age range responded 29.9% were found in the 28–32 age group. Just under two-thirds 90% of these participants answered as an employee within some form of industry versus 10% that responded as volunteers or student. Over half 57.2% of the respondents earned a bachelor's degree, 22.3% carried a master's degree, 7.6% a high school diploma, 6.5% an associate degree, and 6.5% a doctoral/professional degree. As it relates to community role, 62.2% responded as an active member of their community in some capacity, 10% responded as a community leader, and 27.9% answered as not actively working within their community. Table 14.4 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the study sample.

Table 14.4 Demographic characteristics of study sample

Characteristic	*n*	*%*	*Characteristic*	*n*	*%*
Total	341	100	Ethnicity		
Age			White	182	53.4
18–32	167	49	Non-white	159	46.6
33–57	147	42.8			
Greater than 57	27	7.9	Community role		
Gender			Non-active community member	95	27.9
Male	189	55.4	Active community member	212	62.2
Female	149	43.7	Community leader	34	10
Other	3	0.9	Professional domain		
Education			Organization position	250	73.3
High School	26	7.6	Government position	43	12.6
Assoc. Degree	22	6.5	Other	48	14.1
Bach. Degree	195	57.2			
Master Degree	76	22.3	Organizing performance		
Doc. or Prof. Degree	22	6.5	Performance declined	37	10.9
Industry			Performance not changed	110	32.3
Industrial	307	90	Performance improved	134	39.3
Other	34	10	Not applicable	60	17.6

The results of the hypotheses testing with standardized β weights, upper and lower bounds, and p-values can be found in Table 14.5; and respectively, includes a squared multiple correlation table to review. Table 14.6 displays the results and significance of the controls within our model.

As hypothesized, systematically organizing and operating the AI platform with the SOAR framework process reveals a direct positive relationship to innovative capacity ($\beta = -0.353^{*}$); and applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach increases resiliency for ($\beta = -0.672^{*}$). Additionally, innovation capacity revealed a partial mediating effect between implementing the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach and resilience towards a robust community vitality ($\beta = 0.103^{*}$), and building resiliency also revealed partial mediation between implementing the AI platform with the SOAR framework ($\beta = 0.381^{*}$). As a result (H1–H4) showed strong support for all direct and indirect effects with a ($p > 0.050$) significance. All estimates in hypotheses were bias-corrected two-tailed with 95% level of confidence, and as shown the upper and lower confidence intervals did not cross zero, which reinforces our confidence of each estimate with 95% level of confidence.

Table 14.5 Direct and indirect effects with squared multiple correlation

Direct effect hypotheses summary table				
Direct effect hypotheses	*Standardized β-weights*	*Lower bound CI*[a]	*Upper bound CI*[a]	*Hypothesis supported?*
H1: Applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach increases innovative capacity for community vitality	0.353*	0.282	0.421	Supported
H2: Applying the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach increases resiliency for community vitality	0.672*	0.549	0.777	Supported

Indirect effect hypotheses summary table				
Mediating effect hypothesis	*Standardized β-weights*	*Lower bound CI*[a]	*Upper bound CI*[a]	*Hypothesis supported?*
H3: Innovation capacity increases the effectiveness between implementing the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach and resilience towards a robust community vitality	Direct w/ med: 0.775* Direct w/o med: 0.353* Indirect: 0.103*	Direct w/med: 0.634 Direct w/o med: 0.282 Indirect: 0.022	Direct w/med: 0.817 Direct w/o med: 0.421 Indirect: 0.209	Supported
H4: Building resilience increases the robustness between implementing the AI platform with the SOAR framework approach and innovation capacity towards a flourishing community vitality	Direct w/ med: 0.733* Direct w/o med: 0.672* Indirect: 0.381*	Direct w/med: 0.654 Direct w/o med: 0.549 Indirect: 0.322	Direct w/med: 0817 Direct w/o med: 0.777 Indirect: 0.447	Supported

(continued)

Table 14.5 (continued)

Endogenous variable	R^2
INOVCAP (MED) (DV)	0.693
RESIL (MED) (DV)	0.694

$p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**, $p<0.001$***
[a]Bias corrected two-tailed with 95% level of confidence

Table 14.6 Results of model controls

	Estimate	*S.E*	*Controls Est./S.E*	*P-value*	*Lower bound CI*[a]	*Upper bound CI*[a]
y = RESIL						
AIEXP	−0.046	0.037	−1.239	0.215	−0.104	0.014
ETHNIC*	−0.077	0.033	−2.313	0.021	−0.127	−0.018
ORGPRFM	0.031	0.041	0.760	0.447	−0.037	0.097
COMMROL	−0.012	0.038	−0.324	0.746	−0.074	0.049
y = INOVCAP						
AIEXP	−0.015	0.036	−0.420	0.674	−0.071	0.048
ETHNIC	−0.001	0.028	−0.043	0.965	−0.049	0.043
ORGPRFM	0.019	0.039	0.478	0.633	0.019	0.081
COMMROL	0.031	0.034	0.904	0.366	0.031	0.091

$p < 0.05$*, $p < 0.01$**, $p < 0.001$***
[a]Control Variable Characteristics—Independent variables of non-interest to the research, but are "controlled" because of the possibility of a statistically significant influence over the study model

We also analyzed variable variance in the causal model, and the results from the squared multiple correlations are attached under effect results and labeled Endogenous Variables. The endogenous variables within the structural model revealed some variances. Around 69% of the variance of the mediating and dependent variable innovative capacity explained by the model, and about 69% of the variance of the mediating and dependent variable in resilience was explained by the model. Controls were analyzed to determine if there were any control variables had significant

effects on the model, and to realize if any control estimates indicated significance at the 95% level of confidence. Appreciative Inquiry experience ($\beta = -0.046$ *ns*, $\beta = -0.015$ *ns*), organizational performance ($\beta = 0.031$ *ns*, $\beta = 0.019$ *ns*), and community role ($\beta = 0.012$ *ns*, $\beta = 0.031$ *ns*) displayed minimal effects on resilience and innovative capacity, however, none were significant at the 95% level. What was also apparent in the upper and lower bound results, was that these three controls crossed the zero-threshold confirming no significance in effects. The control of ethnicity ($\beta = -0.077$*), or ethnic background revealed an unexpectedly slight negative effect on resilience with significance at the 95% level. The confidence boundaries of the estimate were also between a threshold not crossing zero. In contrast ethnicity ($\beta = -0.001$ *ns*) presented no significant effect on innovative capacity, and the confidence intervals crossed zero confirming no significant effects due to ethnicity. Since there was a minimal effect between ethnicity and resilience, the size of the effect did not cause any alarms to our model; however, we do plan to take a closer look at this sample demographic effect in future research by evaluating our model in a multi-group analysis. The results of the hypotheses and final model can be found in Fig. 14.3.

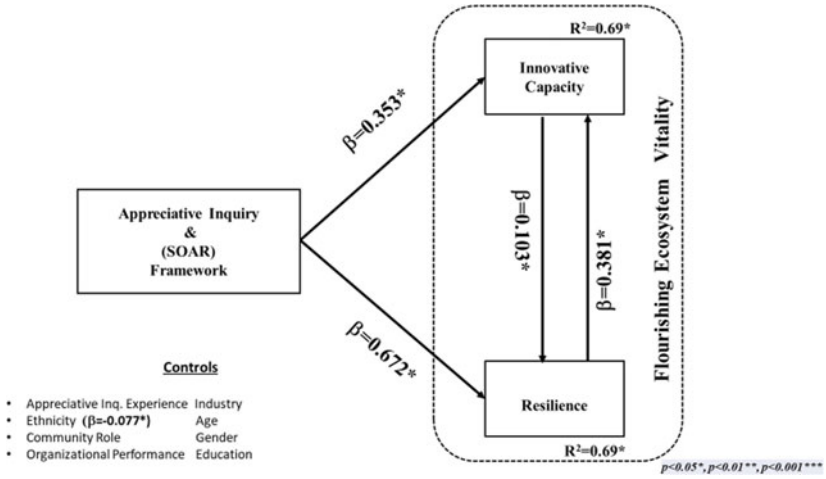


Fig. 14.3 Final model with results

Discussion

This paper presents the development of a structural model using several sets of indices to measure the macromanagement approach by a social organizing structure and a whole systems strengths-based approach towards building innovative capacity and resiliency in CASE. From the perspective of individuals representing the diversity of individuals, organizations, and institutions, and meta-organization of these nested systems (Holling, 2001), we extracted the internalized perceptions from the human experience, and uncovered how the underlying panarchic systems collectively within cities as ecosystem planned, strategized, and implemented themselves and others as the external materialization of their city ecosystem.

The SEM analysis confirmed that our structural model has reliability, discriminant validity, and partial convergent validity, and several indications that the causal logic model designed had a good fit. Our model also confirms that AI/SOAR framework can be a useful tool under a macromanagement organizational structure for transitioning the ecosystem, which, in addition, addresses underlying socioecological and socioeconomic concerns towards flourishing. The AI/SOAR framework creates the space and strategy for genuine collaborative dialogue that opens new design alternatives; while simultaneously self-generating the local social, environmental, and economic shape and form for present and future innovation on the scale of the ecosystem.

We synthesized a whole system strengths-based integrative approach to collectively design and reconfigure a city as a sustainable ecosystem by building innovative capacity and resiliency index instruments. The scales and index used in the model captured seemingly complex and multi-dimensional dynamic capabilities with sub-dynamic capabilities that have strong relationships between Appreciative Inquiry/SOAR, innovation, and resiliency, which ultimately emerges a gestalt of a flourishing community vitality. The key constructs of aspiration, stakeholder strengths focused, positivity framing, possibilities, generativity, performing interdependent task, opportunity, connectivity, collaboration, creativity, coordination, innovative ideas, inclusiveness, clout (power), diversification, trust, asset and resource allocation, planning, and solutions-based outcomes were embedded within our survey instrument, and represented the multiple dimensions and dynamisms related to our structural model, and the ecosystem. The key dimensions were aligned with the characteristics of a macromanagement approach to co-designing by cultivating

instrumental stakeholders' relationships and ideas; and externalizing the process to result in innovative artifacts that are intentionally purposed for present and future utility. Executing the process effectively, most of the artifacts should emerge as sustainable, generative, and beneficial to the ecosystem, as well as the diversity of stakeholders within, assuming there is inclusiveness, or some form of representation of that stakeholder, organization, or participant in the overall process.

In this quantitative analysis we reinforced the notion of Dale et al. (2010) and their observation that there are dynamisms between building resilience and building innovation capacities. We found that these two constructs are highly correlated, but different enough to where one has a positive effect on the other; and from this dual effect develops the organizing gestalt of a flourishing ecosystem. This is an alternative that challenges the dominant classical form, structures, and gestalts of disproportioned modular areas of flourishing and non-flourishing scattered throughout the ecosystem.

The classical change management approaches to city development, environmental management, systems management, and social behavioral interventions have proven, at best, a 30% success rate of implementation. Management approaches for cities as ecosystems that focus on top-down controls of integrated value systems, and that only offer fragmented linear solutions based on individual, modulated, or nested problematic occurrences will continue to be stuck in a quandary of panarchic deterioration, resource depletion, and extinction. Moreover, problem shifting to future generations and short-term fragmented interventions that are usually incrementally effective and mostly ineffective are the opposite of a flourishing system. Thus, we engage scholars, architects, developers, and society, to employ an inclusive, generative, whole system strengths-based approach—with a positive bias—to self-organize and meta-organize their cities as sustainable ecosystems. In this study we offered and tested a conceptual model for stakeholders, specifically, leading stakeholders, to consider a perspective of understanding macromanagement for city ecosystem transition towards sustainability. In addition, this model can be an instrument for government officials, managers, leaders, and primary stakeholders in cities to operationalize the macromanaging approach of an AI-SOAR platform and measure this model and survey instrument periodically in their ecosystems to assess and monitor their collective citizen perspectives towards fostering innovation and developing their flourishing city and living flourishing lives as a full spectrum societal goal.

Supplements and Appendix

Appendix A: Quantitative Survey Instrument and Construct Table

Innovative Capacity (Reflective)

Definition: The managing of creativity and innovation outcomes through stakeholders' cognitive energy, reward, recognition, and objective satisfaction.

Instructions: One a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest score: compared to other cities, how would you perceive you and other stakeholders in your CASE successful pursuit of the following performance indicators:

Stakeholders in our ecosystem suggests new ways to achieve goals or objectives
Stakeholders in our ecosystem come up with new and practical ideas to improve performance
Stakeholders in our ecosystem are good sources of creative ideas
Stakeholders in our ecosystem are not afraid to take risks
Stakeholders in our ecosystem search outside our network for new technologies, processes, techniques, and/or product ideas*
Stakeholders in our ecosystem suggests new ways to increase quality of life
Stakeholders in our ecosystem often have fresh approaches to issues
Stakeholders in our ecosystem develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas*
Stakeholders in our ecosystem promotes and champions ideas to others*
Stakeholders in our ecosystem often have new and innovative ideas
Stakeholders in our ecosystem come up with creative solutions
Stakeholders in our ecosystem suggest new ways of performing task
Stakeholders in our ecosystem exhibit creativity when given the opportunity
Stakeholders in our ecosystem are good sources of creative ideas.
**Indicates measurement items developed from* Scott and Bruce (1994).

- Scale developed by George and Zhou (2001)

Resilience

Definition: (1) A positive psychological system capacity to rebound, to "bounce back" from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or other perturbation. (2) The capacity of a system to undergo change and still retain its basic function and structure.
Instructions: One a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest score—Compared to other cities, how would you perceive your city's successful pursuit of the following performance indicators:

Can access funds for dealing with short-term disasters
Can access insurance coverage for major public and private assets
Has a diverse economy and workforce
Has opportunities for education, training and learning
Has leaders who adjust quickly to change
Has strong leaders who work well together
Is made up of people who support each other
Is made up of people who trust each other
Has long-term plans aimed at ensuring a diversified local economy
Has long-term plans that aim to manage natural resources sector development
Has long-term plans that aim to manage sustainable development
Integrates and shares knowledge amongst stakeholders
Is regularly informed about changes affecting the City as an Ecosystem
Participates in risk and vulnerability planning
Plans for disasters, loss, hazards, vulnerabilities and risk
Prepares and trains for long-term change
Prepares and trains for short-term change

Works well together across internal and external bodies.

- Scale developed by Bec et al. (2019)

Appreciative Inquiry [AI] (the Operating System) and Strengths, Opportunities, Aspire, and Results [SOAR] (the Process) AI-SOAR (Reflective)

Definition: The operating system and strategic process of a macro-management, whole system strengths-based approach that focuses on strengths and opportunities instead of weaknesses and problematic issues for system-level solutions.

Instructions: For each of the following 19 items, select one of the response options from "never" to "always": ○ Never ○ 20% of the time ○ 30% of the time ○ 40% of the time ○ 50% of the time ○ 60% of the time ○ 70% of the time ○ 80% of the time ○ 90% of the time ○ Always.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Collaborative Relationships? "Collaborative Relationships" involve working together in your City as an Ecosystem to achieve shared goals.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Generative Questions? "Generative Questions" are questions you ask to discover or create new things that you can use to positively alter the collective future of yourself or your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Open Communications? "Open Communication" is the straightforward and truthful communication by all parties in your City as an Ecosystem to express ideas to each another.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Positive Framing? "Positive Framing" refers to a positive frame of thought that focuses on overcoming challenges, motivating people, and moving collaborative projects forward for you or your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Solutions? "Solutions" are creating opportunities to achieve success for you or your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Stakeholder Needs? "Stakeholders' Needs" are the interests or needs of those people internal or external to the City as an Ecosystem essential to achieving the communities' success.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Whole System? "Whole System" is how things

are related and how they influence one another within your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Assets? "Assets" are those strengths that create personal and total City as an Ecosystem value.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Capabilities? "Capabilities" are those abilities that create the best for yourself and your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Strengths? "Strengths" are those greatest capabilities of you and your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Ideas? "Ideas" are your thoughts or suggestions for possible courses of action for yourself and your City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Opportunities? "Opportunities" are those ideas or innovations that make it possible to turn personal and whole City as an Ecosystem visions into reality.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Possibilities? "Possibilities" are those outcomes that may lead to personal and whole City as an Ecosystem success.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Aspirations? Aspirations are your strong desires to achieve the whole City as an Ecosystem vision.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Desires? "Desires" are your sense of hope for success for yourself and your whole City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your life and City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Values? "Values" are what you and your whole City as an Ecosystem care deeply about.

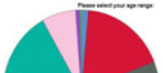
When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Completed Tasks? "Completed Tasks" are those completed activities that help you achieve results for your whole City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Outcomes? "Outcomes" are those meaningful activities that when completed will have a positive result for yourself and your whole City as an Ecosystem.

When you approach strategy in your City as an Ecosystem, how often do you focus on Results? "Results" are the measured total outcomes for success.

- Scale developed by Cole and Stavros (2019)

Appendix B: Sample Demographics of Quantitative Study

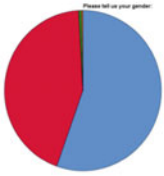


AGE

		Percent
By	18-22	1.5
Range	23-27	17.6
	28-32	29.9
	33-42	24.3
	43-44	4.7
	48-57	13.8
	58-67	7.0
	68-80	.9
	Decline	.3
	Total	100.0

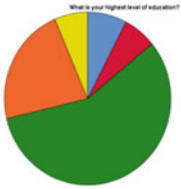
ETHNIC

	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.9
Asian - A person having origins	19.1
Black or African American	9.4
Hispanic or Latino	12.3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	.3
White	53.4
Two or more races	1.5
Decline	.3
Other	.9
Total	100.0



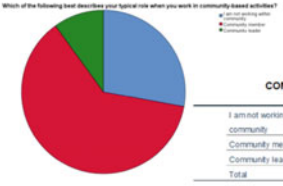
GENDER

	Percent
Male	55.4
Female	43.7
Non-Binary	.6
Decline	.3
Total	100.0



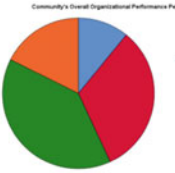
EDUC

	Percent
High School	7.6
Associate Degree	6.5
Bachelor's Degree	57.2
Master's Degree	22.3
Doctoral or Professional Degree	6.5
Total	100.0



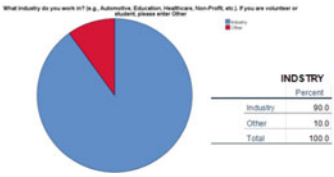
COMMROL

	Percent
I am not working within a community	27.9
Community member	62.2
Community leader	10.0
Total	100.0



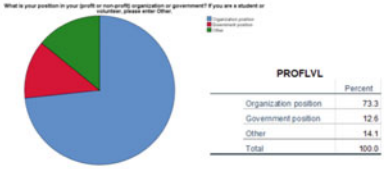
ORGPRFM

	Percent
Performance has declined and is worse	10.9
Performance has not changed	32.3
Performance has improved and is better	39.3
Not applicable	17.6
Total	100.0



INDSTRY

	Percent
Industry	90.0
Other	10.0
Total	100.0



PROFLVL

	Percent
Organization position	73.3
Government position	12.6
Other	14.1
Total	100.0

Appendix C: Total Variance Explained

Factor Total	*Cumulative %*	*Total %*
1	46.446	46.446
2	5.08	51.526
3	3.004	54.53

Appendix D: Quantitative Unobserved Variable Correlation Matrix

Factor	*AI-SOAR*	*Innovative capacity*	*Resilience*
AI-SOAR	–		
Innovative capacity	0.680	–	
Resilience	0.732	0.744	-

Appendix E: Quantitative Three Factor Pattern Matrix

	3 factor		
	AI-SOAR	Innovative capacity	Resilience
RRA1			0.404
RRA2			0.373
RDI1			0.545
RDI2			0.408
RCT1			0.524
RCT2			0.722
RCT3			0.486
RCT4			0.568
RCC1			0.656
RCC2			0.688
RCC3			0.736

(continued)

(continued)

		3 factor	
RCC4			0.537
RCC5			0.613
RCC6			0.581
RCC7			0.589
RCC8			0.716
RCC9			0.621
RCC10			0.772
IC1		0.589	
IC2		0.642	
IC3		0.804	
IC4		0.743	
IC5		0.607	
IC6		0.701	
IC7		0.77	
IC8		0.633	
IC9		0.59	
IC10		0.769	
IC11		0.772	
IC12		0.703	
IC13		0.75	
IC14		0.86	
AI1	0.767		
AI2	0.697		
AI3	0.786		
AI4	0.681		
AI5	0.71		
AI6	0.79		
AI7	0.611		
SST1	0.692		
SST2	0.586		
SST3	0.879		
SOP1	0.736		
SOP2	0.69		
SOP3	0.689		
SAS1	0.786		
SAS2	0.7		
SAS3	0.702		
SRE1	0.666		
SRE2	0.636		
SRE3	0.652		
Cronbach α	0.962	0.904	0.935

References

Adler, A., & Seligman, M. E. (2016). Using wellbeing for public policy: Theory, measurement, and recommendations. *International Journal of Wellbeing, 6*(1), 1–35.

Bec, A., Char-lee, J. M., & Moyle, B. D. (2019). Community resilience to change: Development of an index. *Social Indicators Research, 142*(3), 1103–1128.

Berkowitz, H. (2018). Meta-organizing firms' capabilities for sustainable innovation: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 175*, 420–430.

Berkowitz, H., & Dumez, H. (2016). The concept of meta-organization: Issues for management studies [Article]. *European Management Review, 13*(2), 149–156. https://doi.org/10.1111/emre.12076

Berkowitz, H., Bucheli, M., & Dumez, H. (2017). Collectively designing CSR through meta-organizations: A case study of the oil and gas industry. *Journal of Business Ethics, 143*(4), 753–769.

Boons, F., & Lüdeke-Freund, F. (2013). Business models for sustainable innovation: State-of-the-art and steps towards a research agenda. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 45*, 9–19.

Boschma, R. (2015). Towards an evolutionary perspective on regional resilience. *Regional Studies, 49*(5), 733–751.

Burt, R. S. (1992). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Harvard University Press.

Bushe, G. (2007). Appreciative inquiry is not about the positive. *OD Practitioner, 39*(4), 33–38.

Bushe, G. (2012). Feature choice by Gervase Bushe Foundations of appreciative inquiry: History, criticism and potential. *AI Practitioner, 14*(1), 8–20.

Bushe, G. R. (2013). Generative process, generative outcome: The transformational potential of appreciative inquiry. In *Organizational generativity: The appreciative inquiry summit and a scholarship of transformation* (Vol. 4, pp. 89–113). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Bushe, G. R., & Paranjpey, N. (2015). Comparing the generativity of problem solving and appreciative inquiry: A field experiment. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 51*(3), 309–335.

Byrne, B. M. (2004). Testing for multigroup invariance using AMOS graphics: A road less traveled. *Structural Equation Modeling, 11*(2), 272–300.

Byrne, B. M. (2016). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Cameron, K. S., Dutton, J. E., & Quinn, R. (2003). An introduction to positive organizational scholarship. *Positive Organizational Scholarship, 3*(13), 2–21.

Cameron, K. S., & Spreitzer, G. M. (2011). *The Oxford handbook of positive organizational scholarship*. Oxford University Press.

Cañeque, F. C., & Hart, S. L. (2017). *Base of the pyramid 3.0: Sustainable development through innovation and entrepreneurship*. Routledge.

Cassiolato, J. E., Pessoa de Matos, M. G., & Lastres, H. M. (2014). Innovation systems and development. In B. Currie-Alder, R. Kanbur, D. M. Malone, & R. Medhora (Eds.), *International development: Ideas, experience, and prospects*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199671656.003.0034

Cole, M. L., & Stavros, J. M. (2019). SOAR: A framework to build positive psychological capacity in strategic thinking, planning, and leading. In L. E. Van Zyl & S. Rothmann, Sr. (Eds.), *Theoretical approaches to multi-cultural positive psychological interventions* (pp. 505–521). Springer.

Cole, M., Stavros, J., & Zerilli, M. (2017). *The SOAR profile (TSP) 2.0: A rapid assessment tool to help individuals and teams build strategic capacity*. Fifth Annual Research Day. Lawrence Technological University.

Cole, M. L., Cox, J. D., & Stavros, J. M. (2018). SOAR as a mediator of the relationship between emotional intelligence and collaboration among professionals working in teams: Implications for entrepreneurial teams. *SAGE Open, 8*(2), 2158244018779109.

Cole, M. L., Cox, J. D., & Stavros, J. M. (2019). Building collaboration in teams through emotional intelligence: Mediation by SOAR (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results). *Journal of Management and Organization, 25*(2), 263–283.

Cooperrider, D., & Laszlo, C. (2012). The sustainable design factory [Article]. *AI Practitioner, 14*(2), 29–34. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=83431273&site=ehost-live

Cooperrrider, D. L. (2012). The concentration effect of strengths. *Organizational Dynamics, 41*(2), 106.

Cooperrider, D. L., & McQuaid, M. (2012). The positive arc of systemic strengths: How appreciative inquiry and sustainable designing can bring out the best in human systems. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship, 46*(Summer), 71–102.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. In R. Woodman and W. Pasmore (Eds.), *Research in organizational change and development* (Vol. 1, pp. 129–169). In *Organizational generativity: The appreciative inquiry summit and a scholarship of transformation* (Vol. 4, pp. 3–67). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (2013). A contemporary commentary on appreciative inquiry in organizational life. *Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life*.

Cooperrider, D. L., Whitney, D., & Stavros, J. M. (2008). *The appreciative inquiry handbook: For leaders of change* (2nd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Zhexembayeva, N. (2013). Embedded sustainability and the innovation-producing potential of the UN global compact's environmental principles. *Globally Responsible Leadership*, 107–127.

Dale, A., Foon, R., Herbert, Y., & Newell, R. (2016). Community vitality: from adaptation to transformation.

Dale, A., Ling, C., & Newman, L. (2010). Community vitality: The role of community-level resilience adaptation and innovation in sustainable development. *Sustainability, 2*(1), 215–231.

Davoudi, S., Shaw, K., Haider, L. J., Quinlan, A. E., Peterson, G. D., Wilkinson, C., Fünfgeld, H., McEvoy, D., Porter, L., & Davoudi, S. (2012). Resilience: A bridging concept or a dead end? "Reframing" resilience: Challenges for planning theory and practice interacting traps: Resilience assessment of a pasture management system in Northern Afghanistan urban resilience: What does it mean in planning practice? Resilience as a useful concept for climate change adaptation? The politics of resilience for planning: A cautionary note: Edited by Simin Davoudi and Libby Porter. *Planning Theory & Practice, 13*(2), 299–333.

Folke, C., Carpenter, S., Walker, B., Scheffer, M., Chapin, T., & Rockström, J. (2010). Resilience thinking: Integrating resilience, adaptability and transformability. *Ecology and Society, 15*(4).

Forgeard, M. J., Jayawickreme, E., Kern, M. L., & Seligman, M. E. (2011). Doing the right thing: Measuring wellbeing for public policy. *International Journal of Wellbeing, 1*(1).

Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. *American Psychologist, 60*(7), 678–686.

Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(5), 1045.

George, J. M., & Zhou, J. (2001). When openness to experience and conscientiousness are related to creative behavior: An interactional approach. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(3), 513.

Glavas, A., Senge, P., & Cooperrider, D. L. (2010). Building a Green City on a Blue Lake: A model for building a local sustainable economy. *People and Strategy, 33*(1), 26.

Glovis, M. J., Cole, M. L., & Stavros, J. (2014). SOAR and motivation as mediators of the relationship between flow and project success. *Organization Development Journal, 32*(3), 57–73.

Gulati, R., Puranam, P., & Tushman, M. (2012). Meta-organization design: Rethinking design in interorganizational and community contexts. *Strategic Management Journal, 33*(6), 571–586.

Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review, 31*(1), 2–24. https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203

Hamel, G. (1998). Opinion: Strategy innovation and the quest for value. *Sloan Management Review, 39*(2), 7–14.

Henrekson, M. (2014). Entrepreneurship, innovation, and human flourishing [Article]. *Small Business Economics, 43*(3), 511–528. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-014-9551-y

Herrmann, T., Jahnke, I., & Loser, K.-U. (2004). The role concept as a basis for designing community systems. In F. Darses, R. Dieng, C. Simone, & M. Zackland (Eds.), *Cooperative systems design: Scenario-based design of collaborative systems* (pp. 163–178). IOS Press.

Holling, C. S. (2001). Understanding the complexity of economic, ecological, and social systems. *Ecosystems, 4*(5), 390–405.

Holm, J. R., Lorenz, E., Lundvall, B.-Å., & Valeyre, A. (2010). Organizational learning and systems of labor market regulation in Europe. *Industrial and Corporate Change, 19*(4), 1141–1173.

Hu, L. t., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 6*(1), 1–55.

Jonas, J. M., Boha, J., Sörhammar, D., & Moeslein, K. M. (2018). Stakeholder engagement in intra-and inter-organizational innovation: Exploring antecedents of engagement in service ecosystems. *Journal of Service Management, 29*(3), 399–421.

Kemp, R., & Loorbach, D. (2003). *Governance for sustainability through transition management*. Paper presented at the Open Meeting of Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Research Community, Montreal, Canada.

Khavarian-Garmsir, A. R., & Zare, S. M. (2015). SOAR framework as a new model for the strategic planning of sustainable tourism. *Tourism Planning & Development, 12*(3), 321–332.

Kirkman, B. L., Mathieu, J. E., Cordery, J. L., Rosen, B., & Kukenberger, M. (2011). Managing a new collaborative entity in business organizations: Understanding organizational communities of practice effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*(6), 1234–1245.

Kline, R. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Libbrecht, N., Lievens, F., & Schollaert, E. (2010). Measurement equivalence of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale across self and other ratings. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 70*(6), 1007–1020.

MacCoy, D. J. (2014). Appreciative inquiry and evaluation–Getting to what works. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, 29*(2), 104–127.

Macharis, C., & Kin, B. (2017). The 4 A's of sustainable city distribution: Innovative solutions and challenges ahead. *International Journal of Sustainable Transportation, 11*(2), 59–71.

Maier, S. F., & Seligman, M. E. (2016). Learned helplessness at fifty: Insights from neuroscience. *Psychological Review, 123*(4), 349–367.

Malhotra, N. K., Mukhopadhyay, S., Liu, X., & Dash, S. (2012). One, few or many?: An integrated framework for identifying the items in measurement scales. *International Journal of Market Research, 54*(6), 835–862.

Matsunaga, M. (2010). How to Factor-Analyze Your Data Right: Do's, Don'ts, and How-To's. *International Journal of Psychological Research, 3*(1).

Maxton, P. J., & Bushe, G. R. (2018). Individual cognitive effort and cognitive transition during organization development. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 54*(4), 424–456.

McClellan, J. L. (2007). Marrying positive psychology to mediation: Using appreciative inquiry and solution-focused counseling to improve the process. *Dispute Resolution Journal, 62*(4), 29.

McDonald, R. P., & Marsh, H. W. (1990). Choosing a multivariate model: Noncentrality and goodness of fit. *Psychological Bulletin, 107*(2), 247.

McFarland, D. E. (1977). Management, humanism, and society: The case for macromanagement theory. *Academy of Management Review, 2*(4), 613–623.

McQuaid, M. (2019). *How do appreciative inquiry summits help organizational systems to flourish?* University of Twente.

Meadows, D. H. (1997). *Places to intervene in a system*. Whole Earth.

Mitchell, M. (2009). *Complexity: A guided tour*. Oxford University Press.

Muthén, B. (2011). Applications of causally defined direct and indirect effects in mediation analysis using SEM in Mplus. Los Angeles, CA.

Na, S., Chung, D., Jung, J., Hula, A., Fiore, V. G., Dayan, P., & Gu, X. (2019). *Humans use forward thinking to exert social control*: Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3443690 or https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3443690.

Parrish, B. D. (2010). Sustainability-driven entrepreneurship: Principles of organization design. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(5), 510–523.

Peterson, R. A., & Kim, Y. (2013). On the relationship between coefficient alpha and composite reliability. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 98*(1), 194–198.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Psychology, 63*, 539–569.

Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods, 40*(3), 879–891.

Roepke, A. M., & Seligman, M. E. (2015). Doors opening: A mechanism for growth after adversity. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 10*(2), 107–115.

Rosado, C. (2008). Context determines content: Quantum physics as a framework for wholeness in urban transformation. *Urban Studies, 45*(10), 2075–2097.

Sachs, J. D., Schmidt-Traub, G., Mazzucato, M., Messner, D., Nakicenovic, N., & Rockström, J. (2019). Six transformations to achieve the sustainable development goals. *Nature Sustainability, 2*(9), 805–814.

Schaefer, K., Corner, P. D., & Kearins, K. (2015). Social, environmental and sustainable entrepreneurship research: What is needed for sustainability-as-flourishing? *Organization & Environment, 28*(4), 394–413.

Scott, S. G., & Bruce, R. (1994). *Creating innovative behavior among R&D professionals: The moderating effect of leadership on the relationship between problem-solving style and innovation*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of 1994 IEEE International Engineering Management Conference-IEMC'94.

Seligman, M. E. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Simon & Schuster.

Seligman, M. E., Railton, P., Baumeister, R. F., & Sripada, C. (2013). Navigating into the future or driven by the past. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 8*(2), 119–141.

Simmie, J., & Martin, R. (2010). The economic resilience of regions: Towards an evolutionary approach. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, 3*(1), 27–43.

Simon, H. A. (1996). *The sciences of the artificial*. MIT press.

Srivastva, S., & Cooperrider, D. (1987). Appreciative inquiry into organizational life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development, 1*(1), 129–169.

Stavros, J., Cooperrider, D., & Kelley, L. (2007). SOAR: A new approach to strategic planning. In P. Holman, T. Devane, & S. Cady (Eds.), *The change handbook* (Vol. 3 of 5, pp. 268–284). CreateSpace.

Stavros, J., & Saint, D. (2010). SOAR: Linking strategy and OD to sustainable performance. *Practicing Organization Development: A Guide for Leading Change, 3*, 377–394.

Stavros, J. M., Godwin, L. N., & Cooperrider, D. L. (2015). Appreciative inquiry: Organization development and the strengths revolution. *Practicing organization development: Leading transformation and change*, 96–116.

Stavros, J. M., & Hinrichs, G. (2009). *The thin book of SOAR: Building strengths-based strategy*. Thin Book Publishing.

Stavros, J. M., Torres, C., & Cooperrider, D. L. (2018). *Conversations worth having: Using appreciative inquiry to fuel productive and meaningful engagement*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Steele, W. (2017). Planning wild cities. In *Connections* (pp. 179–188). Routledge.

Van der Zee, K., Thijs, M., & Schakel, L. (2002). The relationship of emotional intelligence with academic intelligence and the Big Five. *European Journal of Personality, 16*(2), 103–125.

Whitney, D. (2012). Macro management of meaning and identity explorations into the magic of macro-management and crowdsourcing. *AI Practitioner, 14*(2), 24–28.

Whitney, D., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2015). Appreciative inquiry meets positive psychology. *AI Practitioner, 17*(3).

Whitney, D. D., & Trosten-Bloom, A. (2010). *The power of appreciative inquiry: A practical guide to positive change*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Whitney, D., Trosten-Bloom, A., & Vianello, M. G. (2019). Appreciative inquiry: Positive action research. In O. Zuber-Skerritt & L. Wood (Eds.), *Action learning and action research: Genres and approaches* (pp. 163–177). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Yoo, Y., Boland, R. J., Jr., & Lyytinen, K. (2006). From organization design to organization designing. *Organization Science, 17*(2), 215–229. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1050.0168

CHAPTER 15

Exploring the Material Aspects of Sustainability Reporting: A Qualitative Analysis of Sustainability Measures and Reports by SMEs

HaiYan Song and Dennis Heaton

Our era is experiencing a paradigm shift in the business world from more of a-profit- centered perspective of business to a global movement of people using business as a force for good and for global flourishing (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013; Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). This shift can be understood as an expression of consciousness-based leadership and management (CBLM) which is bringing greater compassion and creativity to addressing the grand challenges facing humanity.

H. Song (✉) · D. Heaton
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: hsong@miu.edu

D. Heaton
e-mail: dheaton@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_15

A new perspective on firm performance in a sustainability-driven context gives significance to environmental, social, and governance values as well as profitability. Sustainability measuring and reporting is a demonstration of the rise of consciousness toward more comprehensive understanding of the economic, environmental, and social contributions and accountability. Many businesses have tracked and reported their sustainability management approaches, strategies, and performance by using disclosure metrics (e.g., GRI-G4 guideline and GRI standards), or being evaluated through rating and ranking metrics systems (e.g., Global 100) or applying for organizational certifications (e.g., B-Corp, ISO certifications). The key components of these metrics systems are their materiality principles, framework, measures, sustainability ethical foundation, and institutional context (Herriott, 2016).

In order to understand the fundamental underlying material aspects of various sustainability metrics systems, a qualitative study was undertaken to examine the content of sustainability reports by small and medium enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are businesses that maintain revenues, assets, or a number of employees below a certain threshold. In US, a manufacturing firm that has fewer than 500 employees or a mining business with fewer than 1500 employees are classified as SMEs according to the Small Business Administration (SBA, 2020). In Europe, enterprises which have employees between 50 and 250 are classified as SMEs. SMEs represent over 90% of all businesses in the EU. (European Union Commission, 2021). In most other countries, SMEs contribute over 50% to gross domestic product (GDP) and two-thirds to formal employment (World SME Forum, 2021).

SMEs and Sustainability Metrics

In addition to a big contribution to revenue and job opportunities, SMEs also play important roles in the "three pillars of sustainability": generating economic value while at the same impacting the natural environment and the society with their operations and the engagement of people in all business activities (United Nation's Global Compact, 2020).

Reporting sustainability can bring both internal benefits and external benefits to SMEs.

Examples of internal benefits include—guiding the vision and strategies of SMEs so that they can better position themselves into the context

of global sustainability; keeping track of data quality and providing more opportunities for business growth; providing guidance for compliance and risk management; motivating employees. Examples of external benefits are helping SMEs build goodwill, cultivate trust and reputation, and attract investment. Other external benefits include engaging stakeholders for collaboration and cooperation, and improving competitive advantages (Cohen et al., 2017). With so many benefits, more and more SMEs have measured and disclosed their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance, Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) report by following the GRI guidelines or GRI standards. Or some SMEs just simply release their GRI reports rather than call them ESG or CSR reports. Other SMEs apply for ISO certifications or B-Corp certification.

The literature review shows there is a wide variety of metrics and standards for evaluating sustainability, and the unit of analysis on sustainability can be on a product level, a process level, or whole organizational level (Herriott, 2016). Differences and similarities exist in these metrics systems in terms of materiality principles, institutional context, framework, measures, and degree of stakeholders' involvements (Herriott, 2016). For example, if a firm follows GRI-G4 guideline to report its ESG performance, it can voluntarily disclose some sustainability information. While to earn a B-Corp certification, a firm must score over 80 points on the B-Impact Assessment. Whether or not to be certified with B-Corp is non-voluntary. Rating and Ranking type of metrics such as Global 100 and DJSI are also involuntary metrics.

It is said that what gets measured gets done. However, sustainability measurement and reporting can be time-consuming and may not be cost-effective for some SMEs, considering the challenges in selecting a proper measurement and reporting system from a large pool of metrics and standards, then implementing and reporting. The understanding of the most material aspects becomes crucial for SMEs to wisely choose metrics systems, effectively measure, implement and report to facilitate sustainable management (Stewart & Gapp, 2014), and to unlock business values and benefits (Font et al., 2016). When companies do not understand or rigorously track the **interdependency** between social and business results, they miss important opportunities for innovation, growth, and sustainable social impact at scale (Porter et al., 2011).

Research Question

What are the fundamental common material aspects of SMEs when they report sustainability following GRI or when they get evaluated by sustainability standards such as ISO standards or B-Impact assessment? In order to answer this question, this research applies thematic coding of the SMEs' sustainability reporting documents to define the central or fundamental aspects of sustainability measuring and reporting, to understand the interdependency of three-dimensional sustainability of SMEs from a deeper level.

Research Method

We conducted a content analysis of sustainability report documents. These documents include nine SMEs' full sustainability reports following the GRI-G4 guideline (2015) or the GRI standards (2020), six mini cases of B-Corp Certified SMEs, and 11 mini cases of SMEs following ISO standards. Among those nine GRI full disclosures, some of them have additionally issued their reports relevant to ISO standards such as ISO 26000 for social sustainability, or conducted Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), or reported their achievements against the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) or reported their compliance with the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Principles. The selection criteria of reports documents are types of metrics (Disclosure or Organizational Certifications), industry sectors, and geographical locations. In this research, two types of content analysis were employed: conceptual analysis using thematic coding to find the total codes of certain material aspect, and relational analysis to find the correlations of codes. The analyzed data represent a wide range of metrics used by SMEs for measuring and disclosing sustainability. Dedoose software was used for data management, excerpting, coding, and analysis.

Coding Procedure

First, we located and downloaded the sustainability reports or business cases from the official database of metrics systems commonly used by SMEs. For example, from the GRI report database, we have used keywords "SME" for Size and "GRI-G4" and "GRI standards" for Reporting type to search. We found 135 reporting organizations from

various industries and in multiple languages. We have selected 9 English reports of 9 industry sectors from 5 continents. The selected GRI reports include industry sectors from real estate, energy, health care, media and communication, logistics, tourism, construction, financial service, and data processing. From the B-Corp website, we have downloaded 6 SME business cases from 6 industry sectors such as food, retailer, manufacturing, and so on. From the official ISO website, we have downloaded 11 mini cases of SMEs following ISO standards for analysis.

These downloaded documents were then imported to the *Dedoose* qualitative data analysis software with metadata descriptors. Initial open coding was followed by recoding which added new codes, merged, reparented, or eliminated some initial codes. The recoding stages was conducted by referring to newly emerged patterns/themes from open coding. Then grouping and restructuring the codes was performed with inspiration from the new discovery and the literature review on relevant sustainability issues. During the recursive coding process, excerpts were generated, and memos were constructed. Reports were generated from *Dedoose*, including a grid chart to demonstrate the correlations of different codes or themes, a packed code cloud chart, and bubble distribution charts to show the frequency of certain codes or themes.

Analysis of the documents involved self-reflecting on the similarities and differences of codes and comparing the new discoveries with the original sustainability reports by SMEs. We matched the analyzed reports with specific sectors of the technical manuals of metrics systems, such as GRI-G4 guidelines and GRI standards, the ISO standards, the categories, and subcategories of B-impact assessment for B-Corp certification by the B-Lab.

Finally, we synthetized concepts discovered from the research and integrated them into an abstract model which goes beyond the differences existing in SMEs, and their economic, cultural, and societal contexts.

Findings

The Research question for this study is: What are the fundamental common material aspects of SMEs when they report sustainability following GRI-G4 guidelines or GRI Standards or when they get evaluated by sustainability standards such as ISO series or B-Impact assessment?

To answer this question, we have coded nine GRI sustainability full reports by nine SMEs. These SMEs are from 9 industry sectors located

in five continents, some of which have additionally obtained ISO certifications, or done CDP on the single attribute reporting such as GHG emissions or Energy Star, or have issued UN's SDGs reports and other CSR reports.

Additionally, we have analyzed 11 mini cases of SMEs with ISO certifications and analyzed six mini cases of B-Corp certified SMEs. The reason we have selected sustainability reports according to their different systems of metrics and different industry sectors is that we would like to find the fundamental commonalities among a wide variety of different metrics systems. All analyzed SMEs are with their own limited resources, budgeting, and different organizational cultures.

The Packed Code Cloud (Fig. 15.1) and Table 15.1 generated by *Dedoose* from the content analysis show that the most common codes are Rightness Ethic-based measures for sustainability actions, shortened as rightness ethic (RE) (emerging theme, 456 total counts), social sustainability (318 counts), Governance/Context evaluation (emerging theme, 253 counts), Environmental sustainability (266 counts), Virtue Ethic-based measures for sustainability policy and strategy, shortened as Virtue Ethic (VE) (emerging theme, 231 counts), Consequence ethic for sustainability performance, shortened as Consequence (emerging theme, 159 counts), Economic sustainability (212 counts).

Our original assumptions were that long-term value creation (48), and standardization of operations (59) might be secondary material aspects for SMEs to do sustainability report. It turned out that these two codes have fewer total counts than many other material aspects, e.g., compliance and safety, strategic priorities, competitive power, innovation, requirements and expectations of stakeholders, sustainability monitor apps/tools, sustainability network and partnership, community, employees, profitability and efficiency and reduced cost, energy, waste, water and so on. It is true that by sustainability networking and partnership (117 counts) with government regulators or other sustainability advocacy, SMEs can have easier access to sustainability policy and support, to achieve compliance and security (171 counts). By disclosure and sustainability networking, more business opportunities (93 counts) and easier market accesses can be created for SMEs. Additionally, by promptly responding to the requirements and expectations of the stakeholders (131 counts) using sustainability monitoring apps/tools (121 counts), negative sustainability impacts and risks can be prevented or minimized. For example, one business unit of the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, USA has a

Fig. 15.1 Packed code cloud for all coded documents

"Patient Safety & Quality of Care Data" system to minimize the risks for the patients which can earn credits for this SME business.

Table 15.1 indicates the co-occurrences of codes, which illustrates the correlations among the codes relevant to various material aspects of the reporting firms using sustainability metrics/standards. Co-occurrence is generated from relational analysis of content analysis, which can support the trustworthiness of the studied concepts/codes by analyzing the relations of different concepts (Elo et al., 2014)

As shown, the red cells indicate highest correlations between two codes. The disclosure of economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability are highly correlated with RE-based measures for actions indicators (respectively 22 in green, 28 in yellow, and 35 counts in red). SMEs tend to put the community and employees indicators in the primary position of materiality when disclosing social sustainability, with the highest co-occurrences between code "community" and its parent code "social sustainability" (38 co-occurrences), between code employees and social sustainability (30 co-occurrences). Social sustainability is highly correlated with VE-based measures (36 co-occurrences), and with RE-based measures (35 co-occurrences), which indicates SMEs tend to measure both policy/strategies indicators and action indicators to disclose their social impacts. The research also finds

Table 15.1 Frequency of codes and co-occurrences of codes

	Economic sustainability	Long term value creation	Competitive power	Risk management	Profitability, efficiency & reduced cost	Environmental sustainability	Resources	GHG	Energy	Waste	Water	Social sustainability	Community	Employees	Customer	Health & safety	Compliance & security	Virtue Ethic	Rightness Ethic	Consequence	Governance/Context Evaluation	Opportunity	Strategic Priorities	Innovation	Standardization	Requirements & expectations of stakeholders	Sustainability monitor apps/tools	Transparancy	Sustainability network & partnership	Totals
Economic sustainability	0	6	21	9	21	6	3	0	2	2	1	6	2	1	5	0	7	5	22	10	11	8	8	7	6	6	3	4	4	212
Long term value creation	6	0	1	2	5	2	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	2	6	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	48
Competitive power	21	1	0	2	11	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	6	0	6	3	11	7	1	5	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	107
Risk management	9	2	2	0	2	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	2	8	3	6	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	60
Profitability, efficiency & reduced cost	21	5	11	2	0	8	2	3	2	2	2	2	0	3	3	0	7	2	17	4	4	5	3	3	3	2	1	2	1	139
Environmental sustainability	6	2	2	3	8	0	9	15	22	20	13	19	7	6	2	4	6	16	28	14	10	2	5	8	2	2	7	4	3	266
Resources	3	0	1	0	2	9	0	0	3	7	2	3	1	2	1	0	1	1	5	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	53
GHG	0	2	0	0	3	15	0	0	5	3	6	2	1	1	0	2	1	2	6	5	2	2	2	2	0	1	3	3	1	74
Energy	2	0	1	0	2	22	3	5	0	5	12	4	2	2	3	1	1	3	11	9	4	0	1	7	0	0	3	2	1	112
Waste	2	1	1	2	2	20	7	3	5	0	5	2	2	1	0	3	3	7	15	5	3	1	3	3	0	2	5	3	4	114
Water	1	1	1	0	2	13	2	6	12	5	0	2	2	1	2	2	0	3	7	5	3	3	4	9	0	2	4	3	2	102
Social sustainability	6	1	1	1	2	19	3	2	4	2	2	0	38	30	14	18	7	36	35	5	12	4	3	2	2	8	5	4	6	318
Community	2	0	0	0	0	7	1	1	2	2	2	38	0	10	4	4	3	15	20	3	8	3	2	1	0	4	2	1	7	158
Employees	1	0	0	0	3	6	2	1	2	1	1	30	10	0	3	7	1	7	14	2	9	3	1	0	1	0	3	3	1	128
Customer	5	0	6	0	3	2	1	0	3	0	2	14	4	3	0	3	3	3	16	4	4	2	1	2	1	3	4	1	1	113
Health & safety	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	2	1	3	2	18	4	7	3	0	4	8	10	1	4	0	1	0	1	2	3	3	4	103
Compliance & security	7	2	6	6	7	6	1	1	1	3	0	7	3	1	3	4	0	9	21	11	11	5	4	0	3	8	5	3	5	171
Virtue Ethic	5	2	3	2	2	16	1	2	3	7	3	36	15	7	3	8	9	0	23	8	12	5	4	3	1	10	4	6	4	231
Rightness Ethic	22	6	11	8	17	28	5	6	11	13	7	35	20	14	16	10	21	23	0	17	24	8	10	11	7	15	7	6	14	456
Consequence	10	1	7	3	4	14	2	5	9	5	5	5	3	2	4	1	11	8	17	0	4	4	3	4	1	6	5	1	0	159
Governance/Context Evaluation	11	2	1	6	4	10	1	2	4	3	3	12	8	9	4	4	11	12	24	4	0	2	11	3	7	11	11	7	20	253
Opportunity	8	1	5	2	5	2	1	2	0	1	3	4	3	3	2	0	5	5	8	4	2	0	4	2	1	4	0	2	2	93
Strategic Priorities	8	2	2	2	3	5	2	2	1	3	4	3	2	1	1	1	4	4	10	3	11	4	0	3	1	6	2	3	2	105
Innovation	7	1	2	0	3	8	0	2	7	3	9	2	1	0	2	0	0	3	11	4	3	2	3	0	3	4	5	1	2	94
Standardization	6	0	2	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	3	1	7	1	7	1	1	3	0	0	8	1	2	59
Requirements & expectations of stakeholders	6	0	1	1	2	2	0	1	0	2	2	8	4	0	3	2	8	10	15	6	11	4	6	4	0	0	4	9	4	131
Sustainability monitor apps tools	3	0	1	0	1	7	1	3	3	5	4	5	2	3	4	3	5	4	7	5	11	0	2	5	8	4	0	3	5	121
Transparancy	4	0	1	0	2	4	1	3	2	3	3	4	1	3	1	3	3	6	6	1	7	2	3	1	1	9	3	0	3	96
Sustainability network & partnership	4	1	0	2	1	3	1	1	1	4	2	6	7	1	1	4	5	4	14	0	20	2	2	2	2	4	5	3	0	117
Totals	212	48	107	60	139	266	53	74	112	114	102	318	158	128	113	103	171	231	456	159	253	93	105	94	59	131	121	96	117	0

Note Totals indicate the frequency of the codes. The number in each cell indicates the count of co-occurrences of the code in the row heading with the code in the column heading. Cells with highest co-occurrence are marked red, then green, then blue, then white for no co-occurrence

co-occurrences between other subcategories of social sustainability (e.g., product responsibility, human right, etc.) and social sustainability dimension, which are deleted from Table 15.1 due to their small count values for clear presentation. SMEs tend to use its sustainability networking and partnership practice (20 co-occurrences) as evidence of good Governance. Governance approaches have high correlation to the RE-based measures for sustainability actions (24 co-occurrences in green cell). Economic sustainability disclosure shows some moderate relations with environmental sustainability disclosure (21 co-occurrence counts in green cell). The goal of increasing profitability, efficiency and reducing cost/expenses is consistent with improving competitive power (11 co-occurrences), which will drive the economic sustainability (21 co-occurrence counts in green). SMEs tend to use sustainability monitor apps/tools to improve their governance of sustainability (11 co-occurrence counts in green), which is also the requirements and expectations of stakeholders for transparency (11 co-occurrence counts and 20 co-occurrences respectively in green cells). Therefore, many SMEs put good governance approaches such as sustainability monitoring and sustainability networking as their strategic priorities, evidenced by 11 co-occurrence incidents between the codes of strategic priorities and governance. For example, the GRI report of a Russian SME Bank stated: "The Bank defined a number of key initiatives, which are essential for implementation of its 2013-2015 strategies". This excerpt highlights the importance of strategic priorities for sustainability disclosure and management.

Rationale for the Themes

In sustainability metrics, the measurement indicators are classified into several categories according to their measurement immediacy to sustainability, e.g., policy/goal variables that are leading indicators of sustainability, activity/strategy/action variables which are co-current measurement indicators and outcome/performance indicators. What indicators and measures to choose for measurement, how much information to be disclosed, and what materiality principles to follow rely on what values and ethical ground that the disclosure firms hold (Herriott, 2016).

In sustainability ethics, there are three classical schools of ethics for evaluating foundation of sustainability, e.g., Aristotle's Virtue Ethics with goodness and integrity as its core values, Locke and Kant's Deontological Ethics with its focus on the rightness of the actions, and Hume, Bentham

and Mill's Consequentialist Ethics which emphasizes the decision results and solutions to conflicting duties (Kaptein & Wempe, 2011). In this study, four emerging themes are Virtue ethic-based measures (shortened as VE), Rightness ethic-based measures (shortened as RE), Consequence-based measures (shortened as Consequence), and Governance.

As shown in Fig. 15.1 and Table 15.1, VE-based sustainability evaluates the character and intentions of the disclosure—shown in business policy and strategy. The strategic setup of "Wellness Committee" by the BCLC tourism company in Canada "makes strides to improving mental and physical health of employees", which is a measurement of the BCLC's intention or strategy for its social sustainability.

RE-based sustainability evaluates the inherent properties of an action—exemplified in the rights or duties of the reporting firm's action for sustainability. "We found that our initial score was well below the threshold for a certified B-Corp. However, it gave us strong inspiration and some concrete ideas to act upon. For example, we invested in a collection of rechargeable batteries for all of our wireless sound and electronic equipment". This excerpt evidences the theme of RE-based action measures for sustainability. The codes group that is supportive of the theme of RE includes actions coded with environmental sustainability, energy, waste, and strategic priorities from a mini case of the Audio Production company in WA, United States. This company is a B-Corp certified SME.

Consequence ethic-based sustainability evaluates the outcome of an action for sustainability—a performance measure. "Based on preliminary analysis (supported by the Standards Impact map) the business functions most significantly impacted by standards are: Procurement, Production and Engineering". In this excerpt from a Brazilian company FESTO in its ISO presentation document of 2011, the outcome measures are detailed in the impacts of the standardized process on three areas of sustainability for this company. The supporting codes group from which the Consequence theme emerges are standardization, requirement and expectations of stakeholders, innovation, etc. Governance or contextual analysis relates to how a business management approach supports or undermines the strategies and actions for sustainability. The definitions of these emerging themes are also inspired by ethics discussions in the book of Metrics for Sustainable Business by Herriott (2016) and the business ethics addressed by Crane et al. (2019).

If a SME follows GRI Standards 2020 (Fig. 15.2) to disclose sustainability, it will use GRI universal standards (GRI 101, 102, and 103) along with topic specific standards. A SME can use GRI 101 as a starting point for its reporting and use GRI 102 standard as guidelines to report its contextual information. Then by following GRI 103 standard, a SME discloses its management approaches for sustainability. SME also applies the guidelines provided by topic specific standards such as GRI 200 series, GRI 300 series, and GRI 400 series. GRI 200 series are for economic disclosure, GRI 300 series for environmental impact, and GRI 400 series for social impact disclosure. Each standard has many sub-guidelines as to what indicators to be used for measurement (Global Reporting Initiative, 2020).

For example, to disclose energy sustainability, a SME will need to disclose topics such as energy consumption within the organization, energy consumption outside the organization, energy intensity showing its efficiency in using kilowatt hours to generate dollars, energy consumption reduction, etc. Before disclosing the performance/outcomes of these industry- specific topics, SMEs will disclose their context, strategies, or management approaches. If a SME can efficiently manage its resources, people, and policy as related to energy, and if it can effectively implement some strategies and take actions in decreasing energy consumption intensity, it will be more likely to minimize its environmental impacts and reduce the risks for the prospective investors. The disclosure topics of energy consumption, reduction, and intensity, coupled with innovation strategies, relevant risks, and compliance, therefore, become material to stakeholders. This is why we can see the co-occurrences of code energy and other codes such as risk management, compliance and safety, innovation, from which the RE theme emerges.

Another example is about GHG emissions disclosure. If following GRI guidelines, a SME will need to disclose three scopes of GHG emissions, such as Scope 1 (direct impact), Scope 2 (energy usage incurred indirect impact), and Scope 3 (indirect impacts from business activities from both upstream and downstream activities) (Global Reporting Initiative, 2020). To provide these three scopes of information as related to global warming potential, a SME has some flexibility in identifying the boundary of measurement, and it also has choices as how to mobilize human resources and capitals to collect data for GHG emissions disclosure. However, to what degree of freedom for a SME to choose measures and why it must report some certain attribute, these questions can be

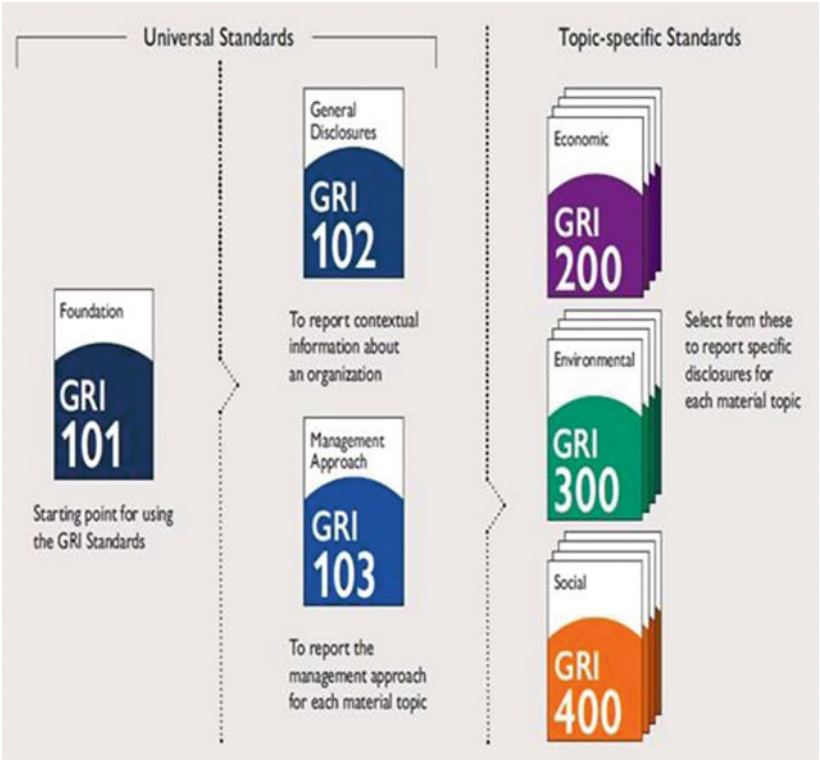


Fig. 15.2 GRI standards (*Source* GRI Standards, 2020 from the GRI technical manual)

answered by reference to a particular value that a standard's guideline provides, and by a worldview that the reporting SME holds. This provides further evidence why some sustainability ethics such as VE theme emerges from the policy or strategy-related codes.

The resources, budgeting constraints, and cultures of a SME also have some influence on the strategy, management approach, actions, and sustainability performance evaluation method that a SME may choose to use. A SME which has social sustainability baked in its DNA may pick B-impact assessment to get B-Corp certified. A SME featured with sustainable operation process and with environmental management

system in place may apply to get ISO certified. Or a SME may just follow the GRI guidelines to prepare for its ESG report or CSR report.

Sometimes a SME must disclose certain attributes due to requirements of regulators and evaluators, or for preventing the potential negative consequences. The Consequence ethic theme, therefore, comes into play to show how the reporting SME harmonizes its results of strategy, action, performance, and choice of management approaches for sustainability.

Summary

The choice of standards, the freedom of choosing measurement methods, or the magnitude of strictness in following certain measures all boil down how a SME views and manages its relationship with nature, with people, and with business performance. With nature, the disclosure of resources, materials, waste, water, energy, innovation, and compliance will be of great values to relevant stakeholders. With people, the labor practice, impacts on community, benefits to employees, network and partnership for social equity will be practical information. With business performance, the profitability, efficiency and effectiveness, risks, and competitiveness will become crucial information for the reporting firm, for its partners, suppliers, community, and society. The emerging themes from the multiple codes (seen in Fig. 15.1) rely on the values and worldviews held by the SMEs and relevant stakeholders. These codes are like the dancing dots in balancing the requirements and expectations of various stakeholder groups. Through synthetizing and diverging, the themes emerge among the dancing codes: virtue ethic that embodies the codes related to intention, policy, strategy, and plan measures, rightfulness ethic that exemplifies the values shown in the codes relevant to business activity's measures, and consequence ethics that is seen in the codes of outcome and performance disclosures. More rich evidence that supports the rationale of emerging themes can be seen in Table 15.2 with excerpts and linked memos for brief explanations.

As shown, each emerging theme is the aggregation of relevant multiple codes and their child codes. The linked excerpts from the content analysis of 26 sustainability report documents provide concrete evidence to support the rationale of the emerging themes. For example, VE takes the stand of moral case for sustainability. "Donations to the community, policies and actions that enhance human capabilities (creativity, wellness and sense of safety etc.)" are good and virtuous (See Memo 1 in Table

Table 15.2 The rationale of emerging themes evidenced by code linked excerpts

Emerging Theme 1: Virtue ethic (VE) for sustainability policy and strategy			
Code example	*Excerpt evidence*	*Source*	*Memo 1*
Soc. (Community)	"*Crossville regularly provides donated tiles to non-profit organizations who are in need.*"	Crossville Construction Company. (2016). *GRI report*.	VE takes the stand of moral case for sustainability disclosure. Donations to the community, policies, and actions that enhance human capabilities are good and virtuous, are therefore valuable disclosure information.
Soc. (Health & Safety)	"*Wellness Committee makes strides to improving mental and physical health of employees.*"	BCLC Tourism Company in Canada. (2017, 2018). *Social responsibility report*.	
Env. (Waste)	"*Murphy has adopted environmentally responsible procurement and waste management policies that can significantly reduce adverse impacts.*"	Murphy. (2017). *CSR report following GRI-G4 guidelines.*	

Emerging Theme 2: Rightness ethic (RE) for sustainability actions

Code example	*Excerpt evidence*	*Source*	*Memo 2*
Ec. (Profitability, efficiency & reduced cost)	"*The Assessment gave us a sense of what practices to prioritize over others…and the Assessment forced us to ask harder questions about the carbon in our supply chain or about making our warehouse more energy efficient. So, it helped our money go much further by just asking us the tough questions.*"	Mills (2014). *B-Impact Assessment report (A quote from Michelle, the marketing manager of Mills Basics, Canada office supplies).*	RE takes the stand of business case for sustainability. Social and environmental factors are precursors of economic performance. To ignore them puts the firm's survival at risk. Innovation, actions in reducing energy and carbon footprint, compliance to rules will minimize risk, reduce cost, and improve efficiency and profitability. Therefore, the activity measures are of great value for sustainability disclosure.
Env. (Energy)	"*One of the key value drivers is to manage energy reduction, reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, help enterprises to achieve energy conservation, and emission reductions.*"	Ping An Insurance Company, China. (2005). *Case Study: ISO certifications.*	

(continued)

Table 15.2 (continued)

Emerging Theme 2: Rightness ethic (RE) for sustainability actions			
Code example	*Excerpt evidence*	*Source*	*Memo 2*
Env. (Water, GHG); Gov (Opportunity, Risk)	"*We have identified ESG-related risks from the perspectives of supply chain, corporate governance, and climate change, including water scarcity, and have begun to identify opportunities to enhance the sustainability our Company and support a more sustainable future.*"	Energy Recovery Company, USA. (2019). *ESG report following GRI Standards*..	
Soc. (Employees, Compliance & Safety)	"*Across our supply chain, our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics governs all our interactions, including those with suppliers, and outlines our commitment to all applicable laws and regulations, including the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act ("FCPA"). Additionally, we provide annual FCPA training to all employees with external-acing responsibilities.*"	Energy Recovery Company, USA. (2019). *ESG report 2019 following GRI Standards*	
Soc. (Product responsibility)	"*On the basis of information gathered through interviews and documents, four major value drivers have been identified: – Quality and product safety…*"	Chococam Company, Africa. (2012). *Case Study: ISO certifications*.	

Emerging Theme 3: Governance of management approaches for sustainability

Code example	*Excerpt evidence*	*Source*	*Memo 3*
Gov. (Sustainability networking & partnership)	"*NEXTDC has been a principal partner involved in the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project since its inception in 2014.*"	NEXTDC company, Australia (2018). *FY 18 Environment and Sustainability Report and CDP.*	The proper governance by a SME for sustainability earns its social license to operate by fulfilling the expectations of its stakeholders. Its effectiveness relies on the management of relationships with nature, employees, customers, suppliers, investors, and the local community. Sustainability networking & partnership is one of good management approaches for sustainability management and disclosure
Ec. sustainability	"*Mission: Development of small and medium-sized businesses in Russia through SME financing in line with state priorities and Vnesheconom bank's target.*"	SME Bank Russian Federation, Europe. (2018). *GRI Report.*	
Env. sustainability	"*All of our environmental management systems are developed, initiated, and governed at the highest levels of our senior management team.... is the lead director of our Environmental Management System and reports directly to our chief executive officer.*"	DDR Corp North America. (2017). *CSR Report Following GRI Guidelines.*	
Soc. sustainability	"*We have community advisory boards for every hospital comprised of local community members to discuss and address concerns.*"	Cleveland Clinic, USA. (2019). *Sustainability & Global Citizenship Report following GRI Standards.*	

(continued)

Table 15.2 (continued)

Emerging Theme 4: Consequence and Outcome of sustainability performance			
Code example	*Excerpt evidence*	*Source*	*Memo 4*
Gov. (Innovation)	"*Our in-development VorTeq™ technology can increase the longevity of equipment…helping to reduce maintenance costs, damage to equipment and operational downtime. In turn, this can indirectly lower emissions associated with oil & gas production….*"	Energy Recovery Company, USA. (2019). *ESG report 2019 following GRI Standards.*	Consequence theme focuses on the outcome and performance measures of sustainability. No business is an island. Sometimes a company may get away with the abuse of people and the environment during the lifetime of the current leaders, but in the long run social unrest and environmental degradation will affect everyone. That is why Consequence-based measures are material theme.
Ec. sustainability & performance	"*The contribution of standards as a percentage of the total sales revenue of Nanotron amounts to 33%.*"	Nanotron Company, Germany. (2011). *Case Study: ISO certifications.*	

Note Env. = Environmental Sustainability, Ec. = Economic Sustainability, Soc. = Social Sustainability, Gov. = Governance

15.2), are therefore reported. RE takes the stand of business case for sustainability. Social and environmental factors are precursors of economic performance. To ignore them puts the firm's survival at risk. "Innovation, actions in reducing energy and carbon footprint, compliance to rules will minimize risk, reduce cost, and improve efficiency and profitability", and these activities are right and pragmatic for sustainable development (See Memo 2), and are therefore very material to be disclosed to stakeholders. The proper Governance by a SME for sustainability helps the company earn its social license to operate by fulfilling "the expectations of its stakeholders". Its effectiveness relies on the management of relationships with nature, employees, customers, suppliers, investors, government, and the local community.

Sustainability networking and partnership is one of the good management approaches for sustainability (See Memo 3). Consequence theme focuses on the outcome and performance measures of sustainability. No business is an island existence. Sometimes a company may get away with the abuse of people and the environment during the lifetime of the current leaders, but in the long run the consequences such as social unrest and environmental degradation will affect everyone. (See Memo 4)

Constructing a Structured Summary Chart

In this concluding part of the paper, we present a graphic model of sustainability metrics by integrating some principles of the Unified Field Chart (UFC), a pedagogical tool of Consciousness-Based Education at MIU (Dillbeck & Dillbeck, 1987; Heaton, 2016). The UFC is the most comprehensive of the classroom charts that connect the parts of knowledge with the wholeness of the Self. This wall chart is divided vertically into two main sections. The right side represents the objective approach to knowledge through the modern sciences and other disciplines; the left side represents the subjective approach to knowledge through Vedic Science. The right side of the chart diagrams the whole discipline being studied, from its most abstract foundational areas (at the bottom) to its most applied areas that serve society (Dillbeck & Dillbeck, 1987, p. 399). We have taken some points from characteristics of UFC to structure the summary chart in layers, presenting more concrete material aspects of SMEs' sustainability disclosure unified in the fundamental levels of sustainability measures, which are connected to the most refined level of natural law at the bottom of the chart.

Two principles of UFC that we applied in constructing this chart are (1) that life is structured in layers, from subtler principles toward the bottom to more concrete applied values at higher levels; and (2) greater unification is found as research probes to deeper, more fundamental levels (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1997). The summary chart (see Fig. 15.3) is constructed to show the connection of each part of knowledge to an integrated whole and to show how all aspects of knowledge are expressions of one unified field which can be experienced as one's own transcendental consciousness (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1997).

As shown in Fig. 15.3, Sustainability governance is manifested in the flow of intelligence that guides the flow of salient or "material" information by which the firm organizes its internal & external environment to achieve its strategic goals. Intelligence embedded in the measurement theory, sustainability ethics, and stakeholder theory are generated from the Natural Law which abides in the section of theory foundations (see the lower part of Fig. 15.3). The variations of measurement systems show many layers of focus on evaluating material aspects which are shown in the applications section of product, process, organization, or nation (see the upper section of the Fig. 15.3).

Sustainability measurement is structured in layers including material aspects in three dimensions of sustainability, measures in policy, action, and outcome, and it is fundamentally about action in accord with all the laws of nature. Sustainability can be evaluated at every level of natural law. Sustainability standards and sustainability reports can be analyzed to explore what are the levels within levels that enliven and unify sustainability programs. Sustainability standards may, for example, be applied superficially to create a green image by lessening the degree of unsustainability. Or the sustainability declarations and practices of a firm may provide evidence of a real consciousness of the interconnectedness of sustainability of all involved stakeholders. A SME can follow the GRI guidelines or GRI standards to disclose its ESG performance, or do its CSR report, or just simply disclose its single attribute to get certified by some eco-label, can apply for a process level or an organizational level of certifications such as ISO series or B-impact assessment.

Through constructing the summary chart for SMEs' sustainability reporting we have attempted to show the logic of the relationships among the concepts which were identified through the content analysis of SME disclosure documents.

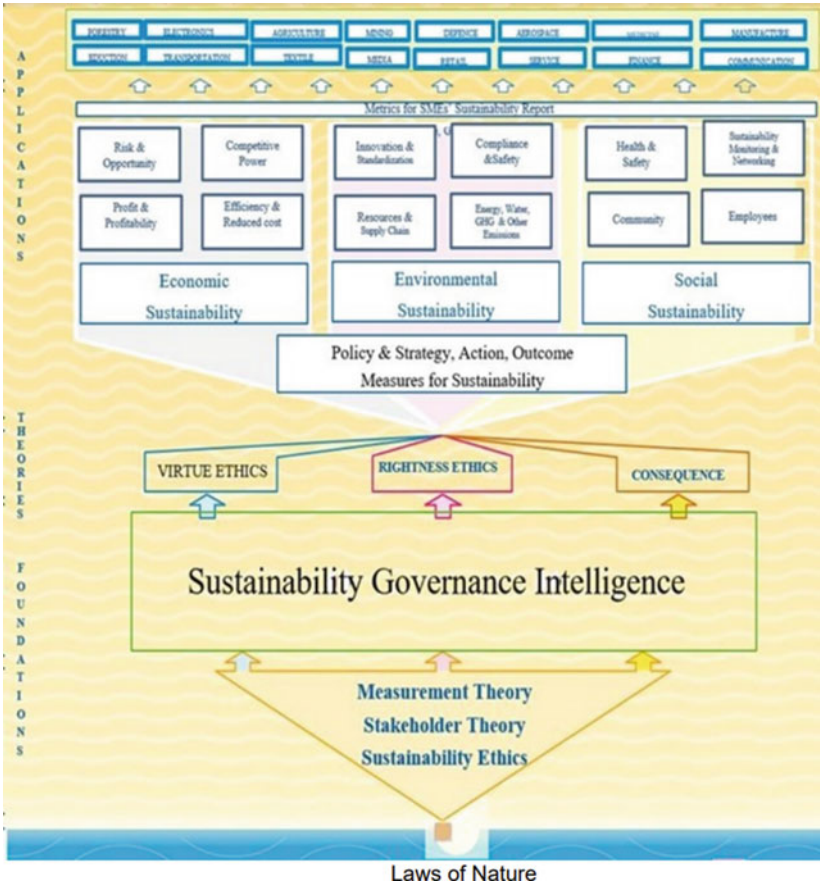


Fig. 15.3 Structured summary chart of material aspects of SMEs' sustainability reporting

As shown, the lower section of Fig. 15.3 shows an abstraction of knowledge which is bridged by the box of sustainability ethics, measurement theory, and stakeholder theory. Above this box is the governance principle for management approaches, which is a transition from a more abstract level of knowledge to more concrete levels of knowledge. In the upper section of the summary chart, we see VE-based Sustainability

measures such as policy and strategy measures for sustainability, RE-based sustainability evaluation which focuses on activity measures, and Consequence measures of sustainability outcome. Moving upward, the boxes describe the metrics as related to three categories of sustainability and their relevant materiality aspects, which are generated from this research and confirmed by the existing guideline or technical manuals of standards such as GRI, B-Corp Certification, or ISO Standards. In conclusion, the values that underlie the sustainability ethics constitute the impulse of "intelligence" from the Unified Field in blue ocean section that promotes a sustainable, evolutionary, direction of change, from more abstract foundational levels to more concrete application levels.

References

Chococam Company, Africa. (2012). *Case study: International organization for standardization*. https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/standards/benefits_of_international_standards/case_studies/presentations/ebs_-_chococamcameroon_rw.pdf

Cleveland Clinic. (2019). *Sustainability & global citizenship report following GRI Standards, 2019*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/74399/

Cohen, E., McKay, A., & Wolfe, P. (2017). *Sustainability for SMEs*. Routledge.

Crane, A., Matten, D., Glozer, S., & Spence, L. (2019). *Business ethics: Managing corporate citizenship and sustainability in the age of globalization*. Oxford University Press.

Crossville Construction Company. (2016). *GRI report*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/44049/

DDR Corp, North America. (2017). *CSR 2017 report*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/58107/

Dedoose Software. https://www.dedoose.com/

Dillbeck, S. L., & Dillbeck, M. C. (1987). The Maharishi technology of the unified field in education: Principles, practice, and research. *Modern Science and Vedic Science, 1*(4), 383–431.

Elo, S., Kaarianinen, M., Kanste, O., Polkki, R., Utriainen, K., & Kyngas, H. (2014, January–March). Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness. *Sage Open*, 1–10.

Energy Recovery Company, USA. (2019). *ESG report 2019 following GRI Standards*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/80547/

European Union Commission. (2021). *SME definition*. https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en

Font, X., Guix, M., & Bonilla-Priego, M. J. (2016). Corporate social responsibility in cruising: Using materiality analysis to create shared value. *Tourism Management, 53*, 175–186.

Global Reporting Initiative. (2015). *GRI-G4*. https://www.globalreporting.org/

Global Reporting Initiative. (2020). *GRI standards*. https://www.globalreporting.org/

Global Reporting Initiative. (2021). *GRI standards*. https://www.globalreporting.org/

Heaton, D. (2016). Higher consciousness for sustainability-as-flourishing. In S. Dhiman & J. Margues (Eds.), *Spirituality and sustainability: New horizons and exemplary approaches* (pp. 121–137). Springer.

Herriott S. (2016). *Metrics for sustainable business* (Kindle Edition). Taylor and Francis.

Kaptein, M., & Wempe, J. F. (2011). *Three general theories of ethics and the integrative role of integrity theory*. Available at SSRN 1940393.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1997). *Celebrating perfection in education*. Maharishi Vedic University Press.

Mills Basics, Canada-Office Supplies. (2017). *B-Impact Assessment report*. https://bimpactassessment.net/case-studies/michelle-reid

Murphy. (2017). *CSR report following GRI-G4 guideline*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/66378/

Nanotron Company, Germany. (2011). *Case study: International organization for standardization*. https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/11_germany_nanotron_presentation.pdf

NEXTDC Company, Australia. (2018). *FY 18 environment and sustainability report and CDP*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/77907/

Ping An Insurance Company, China. (2005). *Case study: for ISO certifications, China*. https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/non-economic_benefits_of_standards--ping_an.pdf

Porter, M. E., Hills, G., Pfitzer, M., Patscheke, S., & Hawkins, E. (2011). *Measuring shared value: How to unlock value by linking social and business results*. FSG. https://www.fsg.org/resource/measuring-shared-value/

SBA. (2020). https://cdn.advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/04144224/2020-Small-Business-Economic-Profile-US.pdf

Scharmer, C. O., & Kaufer, K. (2013). *Leading from the emerging future: From ego-system to eco-system economies*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

SME Bank Russian Federation, Europe. (2018). *Annual Report 2018 following GRI-G4*. https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/70147/

Social responsibility report by BCLC Tourism Company in Canada. Accessed from https://database.globalreporting.org/reports/78507/ on 2 March 2021.

Stewart, H., & Gapp, R. (2014). Achieving effective sustainable management: A small-medium enterprise case study. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 21*(1), 52–64.

Tsao, F. C., & Laszlo, C. (2019). *Quantum leadership: New consciousness in business*. Stanford University Press.

United Nation's Global Compact. (2020). *Explore our enhanced library.* https://www.unglobalcompact.org/library/search

World SME Forum (2021). http://www.worldsmeforum.org/about/

CHAPTER 16

Ocean as a Generative Metaphor for Future Organizations

Anil K. Maheshwari

Introduction

A VUCA world, an era of unprecedented Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, requires new and expansive imagination to guide our thoughts and actions (Nandram & Bindlish, 2017). Metaphors are useful in education (Marshak, 1993; Singh, 2010), business strategy (Strand, 2014), and almost anywhere. Metaphors are a technology of the mind that drives our actions. 'Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; p. 3). Twenty years later they further emphasized that 'the mind is inherently embodied. Thought is mostly unconscious. Abstract concepts are largely metaphorical' (Lakoff et al., 1999, p. 1). Our bodies and brains interact with our environment to provide the mostly unconscious basis for our everyday sense of reality. Even regular meditation and self-reflection may not easily make one aware

A. K. Maheshwari (✉)
Maharishi International University, Fairfield, IA, USA
e-mail: akmaheshwari@miu.edu

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4_16

of the deeply held frames embedded in one's conceptual system, which Tversky and Kahneman (1974) called heuristics and biases.

Most metaphors pertain to relationships between space, time, and function (Weick, 1979). Space and time become primary containers of 'objects,' such that almost everything, including a conceptual idea, becomes an object in some space or time frame. Sackmann (1989) distinguishes between two kinds of metaphors: descriptive and prescriptive. Descriptive metaphors help make sense of complex phenomena by comparing them to something else that is more familiar. These help us understand complex and abstract concepts by using analogies that draw on our existing knowledge and experiences. For example, describing an organization as a well-oiled machine conveys the idea that the organization runs smoothly and efficiently. Prescriptive metaphors help achieve a desired future state or outcome by using analogies that highlight specific values and norms, and direct behavior toward an ideal or desirable way of doing things. For example, describing an organization as a family suggests that members should be supportive, loyal, and committed to each other and that the organization should prioritize relationships and emotional connections. Ghyczy (2003) distinguishes between rhetorical metaphors and cognitive metaphors. Rhetorical metaphors are literary constructs such as 'glass ceiling,' 'golden handcuffs,' 'cash cow,' most of which are used to gain attention, especially in the marketing discipline. Cognitive metaphors are useful devices for discovery and learning, and good metaphors help to convey information quickly by potentially juxtaposing two or more domains and then inspire creative ways of looking at the same things. Flow is a great cognitive metaphor for peak experiences and being in the zone (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994; Goodman & Maheshwari, 2023 this volume). Barner (2008) suggests that visual metaphors may be especially useful in facilitating organizational change.

Popular Metaphors

A primary contemporary metaphor that implicitly guides our social interactions is that 'Argument is war' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This conflict-oriented mindset is reflected in a wide variety of everyday expressions: Your claims are indefensible; he attacked every weak point in my argument; I demolished his argument; I've never won an argument against him. We do not just talk about arguments in terms of war: we actually win or lose them. Many of the words we employ in arguments

are structured around the things we do in war. Even though there is no physical battle, there is indeed a mental battle. Strand (2014) argues that war-like metaphors can misdirect the purpose of business from value creation and toward 'survival of the fittest' sorts of metaphors that inhibit considerations toward ethics, humanism, and sustainability.

Alternatively, one can imagine an argument as a dance. Imagine a culture in which argument is viewed as a dance between two perspectives, where the participants are viewed as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasant way to win the hearts and minds of the audience. In such a culture, competitors would experience, understand, and perform arguments very differently and learn from the interplay of performers, as in *nyaya* (Maheshwari & Maheshwari, 2023 this volume).

Here are some contemporary metaphors closely inspired by CBLM.

1. The 'universe as an unbounded ocean of consciousness' is a descriptive metaphor that would lead to a more expansive approach to thinking and doing, compared with a more materialist view of reality (Nader, 2021).
2. 'Multiple horizons of consciousness' is a prescriptive metaphor would be more conducive to an organic and ambidextrous way of operating across different domains (Maheshwari, 2023b, this volume).
3. The 'human brain is a river and not a rock' metaphor (Travis & Brown, 2011) will describe a more fluid way of thinking (Gurubatham, 2023 this volume).
4. 'Life as a journey,' and the 'the path is the goal' would prescribe a process perspective and lead toward a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006).
5. A 'triple bottom-line' as a basis for performance measurement would be a prescriptive metaphor to encourage a more balanced and sustainable future (Kassel & Rimanoczy, 2018).
6. 'Circular modes of organizing' is a descriptive metaphor that would likely support a thicker web of communication and coordinating (Maheshwari et al., 2022).
7. An 'abundance mindset' is a prescriptive metaphor to guide the thinking about monetizing and democratizing certain goods and practices (Diamandis & Kotler, 2012).

8. A 'blue vs red ocean' is a prescriptive way of addressing the marketplace in terms of an adventure-like or hyper-competitive action strategy (Kim & Mauborgne, 2014).

Metaphors as Imaginations and Frames

The philosopher Martin Heidegger argued that technology has become the dominant metaphor for everything and that we increasingly see nature and human beings as raw materials for technical operations (Blitz, 2014). Once a technological frame is invoked it has implications for how we generate options and act. One of the more significant recent technological shifts is in cognitive neuroscience, where the growing science of neuroplasticity research has shown that our brain behaves metaphorically like a river and not a rock, (Travis & Brown, 2011). Organizations can invoke different mindsets (Dweck, 2006) using a flowing river logic versus traditional rock logic. Table 16.1 shows some key mappings at different levels.

A popular technological metaphor is of everything as 'information' and 'information processing.' The words inputs, outputs, and processes have become deeply embedded in organizational language. Conversations sometimes become downloads of data. The prefrontal cortex of the brain is called the CPU of the brain. There is 'limited bandwidth' for taking on additional work. People buy stuff online (e-commerce) or offline

Table 16.1 Rock vs river logic

Theme	*Rock logic*	*River logic*
Individual self	Fixed identity, image, name, uniqueness, isolation	Socially flowing, malleable, flexible, connecting, learning
Organization model	Functional specialization, financial coordination, stability, bureaucracy	Customer-driven flexibility, value-addition, markets, flat structure, horizons of consciousness
Values	Greed, gain, conflict, competition	Adaptiveness, learning, openness, cooperation
Communication	More is better; fixed meaning	Interpretation in holistic context; trust & intentions matter
Social organizing	Stable classes based on merit	Aqueous chemistry; structuration
Nature of work	Analytical; stable; solo	Knowledge-work; creativity; teamwork

(brick-and-mortar). Even the DNA is a piece of information, however complex.

The information processing metaphor has gone into hyperdrive with the maturing of the powerful technology of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The name itself is a powerful metaphor with an explicit promise of mimicking human intelligence(s) (Gardner, 1993). AI could be a tool for good or bad, depending upon how it is designed and used, by whom, and for what purpose. Maheshwari & Maheshwari (2023) describe how AI can transform the education system through personalized and immersive education, mental health coaching, with a co-pilot answering all questions. We wonder what might be a powerful countervailing metaphor to guide the deployment of AI in organizations and societies?

Traditional Metaphors for Organizations

Conceptual metaphors continue to influence organizational life (Heracleous & Jacobs, 2008; Morgan, 1986). Table 16.2 shows some popular conceptual metaphors that have evolved to describe an organization or the worldviews.

Metaphor of Organization as Ocean

We present the Ocean as a powerful exemplar for organizations. Oceans are a marine environment that supports a great diversity of life forms, including human communities which depend and subsist on them (Silcock, 1994). The oceans contain many ecosystems such as coral reefs, ocean bed, glaciers, and more, that have evolved through the ages, and interact intimately with the changes in climate, and on-shore activities (Thunberg, 2023). Many drops combine with energy to form a wave. Ultimately, the ocean is an extremely big drop. Mystics have described seeing the ocean in a drop. This self-referral indivisibility allows transcending theory of logical classes which states that a class cannot be its own member. By permitting an ocean to contain itself in different forms, one can move up and down the units of analysis effortlessly.

Like the ocean, modern organizations need to be flexible, adaptable, and resilient to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing world. Like the ocean, organizations are a vast and complex ecosystem that should be able to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing environment by embracing a

Table 16.2 Metaphors describing an organization

Sl no	*Organization as*	*Description and features*
1	Machine	Just as a machine is well-designed and well-defined system for precise, efficient, untiring, repetitive action, an organization may be expected to do its activities in the most efficient and untiring way. Complex organizational tasks may be reduced into numerous simple tasks, for which the organizational members are trained and assigned. It is often reflected in statements such as 'fix it.' A machine, however, has no ability to learn by itself, and can fail to perform in unfamiliar circumstances
2	Organism	Implicitly inspired by life, this metaphor is reflected in statements such as 'this organization is growing rapidly.' Just like an organism, an organization is a loose assemblage of resources and components that dynamically balance each other for the organization's health, growth, and self-preservation. An organism may grow by gaining energy and survive by expending energy in fighting crises in dynamically changing environments
3	Brain	Like a control or computer system, the organization may be designed to receive, process, and generate information for coordinating activities within its domain, in a VUCA environment
4	Idea	An organization is essentially a purposeful idea. It is a way of organizing resources, people, and processes to achieve objectives
5	Culture	This celebrates the human and social aspects of creating and storing shared meanings in an organization. The myths, rituals, and stories in an organization are highlighted as modes of providing stability and direction to the human desires within the organization
6	Family	This focuses upon the perpetuation of shared values, traditions, and goals. Behaviorally, it emphasizes the importance of trust, loyalty, and emotional connections
7	Political system or government	This emphasizes the modes of governance employed by the organization in balancing the conflicting interests of multiple stakeholders. The use of power to resolve conflicts is a key aspect
8	Flux and transformation	This focuses on the self-organizing abilities of an entity in an energy field upon chaos theory principles. Organizations are depicted as super-complex, cybernetic machines displaying multiple, circular, causal relationships that cannot be accurately modeled and simulated

(continued)

Table 16.2 (continued)

Sl no	*Organization as*	*Description and features*
9	Theater and/or orchestra	An organization is a synergizing performer that coordinates excellence in individual performances successfully toward a useful performance for the benefit of transforming the audience. Erving Goffman (1959/2002) quipped that the world is a stage where one contributes to one's purpose and ability
10	Psychic prison	An organization as a psychic prison focuses on the organizational equivalent of deep-seated, unconscious, Freudian human impulses make it struggle to establish its identity. Organization and sexuality and power play are thus closely linked
11	Garden	This emphasizes the nurturing qualities of leadership to cultivate a healthy and productive environment for growth and development. A garden can also emphasize diversity of forms and practices, such that employees from different backgrounds, experiences, and skill sets, can work synergistically to create a beautiful and diverse environment. It thus emphasizes the importance of leadership, diversity, inclusion, and collaboration
12	System or web	This emphasizes networks and relationships among entities, who work together to create a strong and flexible larger system. This information-processing-inspired metaphor emphasizes the importance of connectivity, collaboration, interdependence, resilience, and adaptability

similar level of complexity and interconnectedness. These and more similarities are presented in Table 16.3 in a framework of five Vs—Velocity, Variety, Vitality, Versatility, and Volume—(adapted from Maheshwari, 2019) in which the ocean can serve as a powerful, overarching, cognitive, descriptive, and prescriptive metaphor for the organizations of the future.

Ocean and Wave in Conversation

By embracing the qualities of the ocean, organizations may be able to navigate the complex and ever-changing interdependencies of the modern world, and chart a course toward success and sustainability. Their employees and other stakeholders too would be able to feel the necessary autonomy to grow to their fullest potential. The all-encompassing

Table 16.3 Similarities between the ocean and the organization

		Ocean	*Organization*
1	Velocity: Dynamic and agile	The ocean is a constantly changing environment, with tides, currents, storms, weather patterns, waves, and more	Organizations are agile, adaptable, pivoting, and changing direction, to respond quickly to new challenges, opportunities, market conditions, and technologies
2	Variety: Diverse and complex	The ocean is home to a diverse range of species and a great variety of life forms, from planktons to whales, each with unique features that allow them to thrive in their respective environments	Organizations of the future will embrace diversity and inclusivity, recognizing that a range of perspectives, experiences, and skills can enrich the organization and lead to creativity and productivity
3	Vital & Vibrant: Interconnected and interdependent	The ocean is made up of interconnected and interdependent ecosystems, such as coral reef and deep ocean, marine life and chemical composition, seismology and greenhouse gases, and more	Organizations of the future must be based on the realization that they are part of a larger ecosystem and need to build strong collaborative relationships and vital partnerships with customers, suppliers, partners, and competitors
4	Viable: Resourceful and resilient	The ocean is a harsh environment, with predators, storms, and other challenges that can threaten the survival of its inhabitants. It has evolved numerous strategies to cope with adversity, from the hard shells of crustaceans to the poison ink of certain fish	Organizations need to base their design on resilience and adaptability into their core, with a focus on sustainability, risk management, and long-term thinking, so that they are able to withstand setbacks and recover quickly from failure
5	Volume: Vast, and Virgin	The ocean is vast and still largely unexplored, with many mysteries yet to be uncovered. At the same time, the ocean is a finite resource, and its health and vitality depend on responsible stewardship	Organizations of the future need to be open to new ideas and possibilities, with a focus on learning and growth, experimentation, and innovation. They must also commit to sustainability, recognizing that their long-term viability depends on regeneratively creating value for all stakeholders

organization may display higher consciousness management (Maheshwari, 2021) with the waves. Here is an imagined conversation between the ocean as an organization and a wave as a member of the organization.

Ocean: Hello, wave. It's good to see you again. What brings you here today?

Wave: Hello, ocean. I wanted to talk to you. I feel like I'm part of something bigger, and I want to contribute to a higher purpose.

Ocean: Nice. As an organization, we are always looking for people like you who are willing to collaborate and work toward shared goals. What skills and experiences do you have?

Wave: Well, I'm good at moving quickly and adapting to changing situations. I also have a lot of energy and enthusiasm.

Ocean: Good qualities. As an organization, we need people who can help us navigate the ever-changing currents of the modern world. How do you see yourself contributing to our mission?

Wave: I would like to be part of a larger movement, working with other waves to create something bigger and more impactful. Maybe we could help raise awareness about environmental issues and support local communities in need.

Ocean: Good ideas. As an organization, we are also committed to sustainability, social responsibility, and positive impact. We believe that by working together, we can make a real difference in the world. How can we support you in your journey?

Wave: I would love to connect with other like-minded waves and organizations. Maybe we could start by organizing a beach clean-up.

Ocean: That's a great idea. We have a network of partners and collaborators who share our vision and values, and we would be happy to introduce you to them.

Wave: That sounds great, ocean. I'm excited to get started.

Ocean: We're excited to have you on board, wave. Let's work together and make a difference in the world.

How would a wave feel when it reaches the end of its journey? As the wave approaches the shore, its volume decreases, and its velocity decreases

too. Eventually, the wave breaks, and the water crashes onto the beach. As the water recedes back into the ocean, the individual molecules that made up the wave merge back into the larger body of water. The wave loses its individuality and becomes one with the ocean. There is no death or loss for the wave since it was never truly a separate entity but a temporary manifestation of the ocean's energy (Nader, 2021). Instead, the wave's energy and momentum become part of the larger ebb and flow of the ocean, perpetually cycling and recycling into new forms.

Realizing CBLM with the Ocean Metaphor

How does the Ocean metaphor apply to realizing the three principles of CBLM listed in the opening chapter of this book, and explained in detail in the opening chapter of volume 1 of this two-book project (Maheshwari, 2023a):

(1) Paradigm—Consciousness is primary. This principle includes the idea of the complementary existence of opposites and living in total harmony with nature.
(2) Social/Interpersonal—Love is all we need. This principle includes the idea of interacting with empathy and compassion toward all life forms.
(3) Individual—*Unboundarize* oneself. This principle includes freeing oneself from space–time containers, and developing openness and creativity.

We suggest that organizations should seriously experiment by introducing 'organization as an unbounded ocean' as a metaphor of choice for organizing in the VUCA world. The five Vs can provide a nice framework (Table 16.4) to imagine initiatives. Here below we suggest a couple of phrases per 'V' dimension.

There could be innumerable other phrases inspired by the organization as ocean metaphor. The ocean metaphor may apply equally well at many levels—for an organization, for employees, and for the entire set of organizations. The drops combining into bigger drops enables the possibility of unlimited non-egoistic cooperation among entities in contrast against the rock logic that presents rigid boundaries and identities.

Table 16.4 Ocean-inspired phrases for organizational thought and action

V	*Phrase*	*Connotation(s)*
Volume	Don't boil the ocean	Focus: Limiting the size of project
	Stepping stones	Right-sizing: breaking complexity into smaller components
Velocity	Riding the wave	Opportunity: taking advantage of an ongoing initiative
	Going with the flow	Adaptable: taking the most easy and efficient path
Viability	Navigating unchartered waters	Uncertainty: vibrant resilience against challenges
	Weathering the storm	Resilience: Surviving and becoming stronger
Variety	Casting a wide net	*Unboundarize*: seeking diversity, inclusion, and complexity
	Tides of change	Acceptance: Adapt to changing circumstances
Vitality	Diving deep	Consciousness: self-reflection, and root cause analysis
	Sailing in unison	Loving collaboration: sharing vision, norms, and collaboration

Here are some actionable recommendations for CBLM inspired by the Ocean metaphor:

1. *Unboundarize* yourself. Be an ocean to yourself. Be the center of the universe. Lose yourself in the unlimited potential and bliss that lies within. Appreciate and enjoy the harmony and cooperation that organizes the self, from a rag-tag team of aqueous chemicals to a communicative, cooperative ocean of feelings, thoughts, and useful performance. Sing praises for what you truly are (the super-harmonized creation) rather than the superficial (the beautiful face or the sharp mind).
2. Operate from love and empathy. We are all waves in the same ocean. Cooperate in a loving manner and stop worrying about the results of a breach of cooperation. Stop playing games of scarcity while the abundance of the whole ocean of resources lies unused within! Do not let the expansiveness of the ocean within dry up. The ocean absorbs infinite breaches, storms, and pollutants, and yet fundamentally remains the same.

3. Practice gratefulness. Appreciate the gifts of the ocean as you receive them. Do not incisively inquire, merely seek. The ocean is bountiful, and gifts are bound to come your way, if you are patient enough to wait for them, and are sensitive enough to recognize and appreciate them when they arrive. 'The (ocean) does not reward those who are too anxious, too greedy, or too impatient... patience, patience, patience is what the (ocean) teaches' (Lindbergh, 1975: p.17).

Conclusion

Metaphors are a powerful mental technology worth understanding and leveraging. It may be that we do not choose our metaphors. It may well be that it is the metaphors that choose us (Etzold & Buswick, 2008). Knowing our metaphors may be knowing ourselves! That is worth the effort! May consciousness-based and ocean-based metaphors resonate with you.

References

Barner, R. (2008). The dark tower: Using visual metaphors to facilitate emotional expression during organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 21*(1), 120–137.

Blitz, M. (2014). Understanding Heidegger on technology. *The New Atlantis*, 63–80.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1994). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper & Row.

Diamandis, P. H., & Kotler, S. (2012). *Abundance: The future is better than you think*. Simon and Schuster.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random house.

Etzold, V., & Buswick, T. (2008). Metaphors in strategy. *Business Strategy Series, 9*(5), 279–284.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. Basic Books.

Goffman, E. (2002). The presentation of self in everyday life. 1959. *Garden City, NY, 259*.

Goodman, T. & Maheshwari, A. K. (2023, in press). Consciousness and flow for leadership. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 21). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Gurubatham, M. (2023, in press). Fluid intelligence for higher order thinking: Balancing the subjective and objective for sustaining impactful wisdom in this

era of disruption. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural other philosophical approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 21). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Heracleous, L., & Jacobs, C. D. (2008). Understanding organizations through embodied metaphors. *Organization Studies, 29*(1), 45–78.

Kassel, K., & Rimanoczy, I. (2018). *Developing a sustainability mindset in higher education*. Routledge.

Kim, W. C., & Mauborgne, R. (2014). *Blue ocean strategy* (expanded). Harvard Business Review Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago press.

Lakoff, G., Johnson, M., & Sowa, J. F. (1999). Philosophy in the Flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought. *Computational Linguistics, 25*(4), 631–634.

Lindbergh, A. M. (1975). *Gift from the Sea*. Pantheon.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2019). *Big Data* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2021). Higher consciousness management: Transcendence for spontaneous right action. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18*(6), 77–91.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023a, in press). Introduction to consciousness-based leadership and management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management: Vedic and Other Philosophical Approaches to Oneness and Flourishing* (Vol. 1). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K. (2023b, in press). Horizons of consciousness for emerging technologies for management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management: Organizational and Cultural Approaches to Oneness and Flourishing* (Vol. 2). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Maheshwari, A. K., Bachani, J., & Gehani, R. R. (2022). Circular organising for fuller engagement and sustainability. In *Responsible leadership for sustainability in uncertain times: Social, economic and environmental challenges for sustainable organizations* (pp. 91–104). Springer Nature.

Maheshwari, A. K., & Maheshwari, N. (2023, in press). Consciousness based education for management. In A. K. Maheshwari (Ed.), *Consciousness-based leadership and management: Organizational and cultural approaches to oneness and flourishing* (Vol. 2). Palgrave-Macmillan.

Marshak, R. J. (1993). Managing the metaphors of change. *Organizational Dynamics, 22*(1), 44–56.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organization*. Sage.

Nader, T. (2021). *One unbounded ocean of consciousness*. Aguilar.

Nandram, S. S., & Bindlish, P. K. (2017). *Managing VUCA through integrative self-management* (p. 338). Springer.

Sackmann, S. (1989). The role of metaphors in organization transformation. *Human Relations, 42*(6), 463–485.
Silcock, L. (Ed.). (1994). *The oceans: A celebration*. Crescent.
Singh, K. (2010). Metaphor as a tool in educational leadership classrooms. *Management in Education, 24*(3), 127–131.
Strand, R. (2014). *Metaphors we strategize by*. CBS Center for Corporate Social Responsibility.
Thunberg, G. (2023). *The climate book: The facts and the solutions*. Penguin Press.
Travis, F., & Brown, S. (2011). My brain made me do it. *The postconventional personality: Assessing, researching, and theorizing higher development*, 23.
Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases: Biases in judgments reveal some heuristics of thinking under uncertainty. *Science*, *185*(4157), 1124–1131.
Von Ghyczy, T. (2003). *The fruitful flaws of strategy metaphors*. Harvard Business Review.
Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Index

A. K. Maheshwari (ed.), *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume 2*, Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05839-4

D

P

Q

T