

Chapter 8

Moral Intuition and Transformative Organizations

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Abstract This is a longitudinal case study about an entrepreneur in Massachusetts who exemplifies the practices and policies of a good company. Dave Ferrairo illustrates the transformative role played by organizational leaders who are committed to combining a focus on people, planet, and profit in such a way as to incorporate the principles of corporate social responsibility and Christian social teaching in their daily operations. Ferrairo’s actions are compared with the songs of Bruce Springsteen, who develops in a similar three-stage process (rational, emotional, and spiritual) to move beyond the traditional “American Dream” to a focus on something other than oneself, other people, and nature. The focus becomes one of universality and appreciation of the common good.

8.1 Introduction

Richard Ryan and Tim Kasser studied the American Dream and discovered two distinct sets of aspirations directing people’s lives towards personal well-being. The first of these refers to the “extrinsic aspirations” of self-acceptance/autonomy and financial success/money [1, p. 411]. Their study does not include an explicit examination of the behavioral attitudes, motives, and values required to attain them; however, their assumptions and conclusions suggest an attitude of competitive self-interest motivated towards success that enlists the values of selfishness and

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ambition as behavioral determinants of these extrinsic aspirations. Together, these aspirations and behaviors imply a broader, overriding worldview identifying well-being with respect to individual independence.¹

Kasser and Ryan also attribute “intrinsic aspirations” to the American Dream and identify these as affiliation/relatedness and community feeling/helpfulness [1, p. 411]. These aspirations imply a quite different combination of behavioral determinants: an attitude of cooperative concern for others, motivated towards happiness, and enlisting the values of compassion and altruism. This combination of aspirations and behaviors recommend another worldview identifying well-being with respect to relational dependence.²

They conclude that “less adjustment was consistently evidenced for individuals who held financial success as a more central aspiration” than affiliation, or community feeling, and, consequently, resulted in “less self-actualization, less vitality, more depression, more anxiety” [1, p. 420]. Later, Kasser recommended that scholars and practitioners become more attentive to the intrinsic aspirations and “help increase intrinsic and decrease extrinsic aspirations” by recognizing the personal and social implications of contributing to the status quo, especially with respect to work and business:

Consider a man who aspires to make a great deal of money. By placing a great deal of emphasis on this particular aim in life, this man is likely to create a lifestyle for himself in which he works long hours, to chose a profession based more on its pay and status than on its inner rewards, and to make decisions that maximize his own personal material gain when confronted with certain quandaries. Such experiences and decisions, in turn, have ramifications for his personal quality of life and for the well-being of those around the man. For example, if this man works 80 hour weeks with rare vacations, little time is left to pursue enjoyable activities, to nurture relationships with his spouse and children, or to use his skills and talents to contribute to his community. As a result of this choice of values and goals, the well-being of the man, his family, and his community may all suffer [5, p. 33].

Kasser is describing American capitalism’s tendency to wreak havoc on personal and social well-being by promoting longer working hours, presumably at the cost of relatedness and helpfulness. He is urging less emphasis on the motives, attitudes, and values of the rationally driven, individualistic extrinsic aspirations and more on those of the emotionally driven, relational intrinsic aspirations for, in his words, “the well-being of the man, his family, and his community.” Kasser and Ryan recommend an approach to business and social ethics which enlists two basic perspectives, each of which connects human identity to human behavior, and recommend pursuit of the intrinsic rather than the extrinsic aspirations for personal well-being.

¹ For further information on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, please see Maslow, A theory of human motivation [2], and Herzberg, One more time: How do you motivate employees? [3].

² For additional information on affiliative relationships, see Alderfer, *Existence, Relatedness, and Growth: Human Needs in Organizational Settings* [4].

Moving from psychology to philosophy, specifically to business ethics, fundamental disagreement with this dual perspective rises to the fore. As Trevor Cole describes the contribution of scholars at the University of Toronto to business ethics, he focuses on two difficulties arising from appeal to either the extrinsic or intrinsic aspirations. Cole cites Thomas Hurka as he addresses difficulties arising from adherence to the intrinsic aspirations and describes how easily the demands of relatedness and helpfulness can lead into unethical behavior. “Once the self-interested people start to cheat,” he argues, “that affects the people who believe in fairness, because they’re prepared to do what’s right only so long as other people are doing it. And so they start to cheat” [6]. While focusing on Kasser and Ryan’s intrinsic aspirations may contribute to personal well-being by promoting relational affiliation, it may also encourage and support unethical behavior. It betrays a tendency to go along with the crowd, to be accepted [7].

Cole also cites Dennis O’Hara’s critique of extrinsic aspirations and his concern with how the principles of rational economics contribute to unethical conduct. “We’ve fallen in recent times into this notion that there has to be a single right answer,” he claims, adding that “It’s as if we want a catechism and everything’s going to fit into this catechism.” Moreover, that catechism “has to do with the bottom line—what’s right for the shareholders is, de facto, right” [6]. For O’Hara, a worldview grounded in the extrinsic aspirations of self-acceptance/autonomy and financial success/money provides a platform for unethical behavior even as it encourages economic well-being.

O’Hara’s and Hurka’s insights call into question not only Kasser and Ryan’s conclusions but also the American Dream itself and its relegation of aspirations and behavioral determinants to either of two distinct perspectives. To alleviate this impasse, O’Hara recommends another perspective. “When people convince themselves there is no higher accountability,” he claims, “it’s easier to believe the universe is essentially meaningless. Once you reach that conclusion, the concept of the common good falls away, and it’s a short leap to deciding that the only purpose to life is one’s own personal gain and pleasure” [6].³ That loss of sensibility for “the common good” is caused, argues O’Hara, by an incremental loss of a religious sensibility or consciousness. “In the old days,” he explains, “we had what we called ‘the God of the gaps.’ Whenever there was a gap in our knowledge—that was God. As science progresses you eventually fill the gaps and then, ‘Oh, there’s no God’” [6].

O’Hara is suggesting that reducing personal well-being to rational and emotional determinants of aspiration and behavior ignores not only a religious sensibility but also an appreciation of the common good. Personal well-being and good ethics are relegated to the limitations of their respective assumptions and conclusions. He intimates that a third perspective is needed to alleviate this limitation and recommends a third worldview, a third way of viewing the world through the lenses of another set of aspirations with its own behavioral determinants.

³ See also Alford and Naughton, *Beyond the shareholder model of the firm* [8].

Appealing to a spiritual perspective, it is feasible to recommend a set of “transforming aspirations” to broaden appeals to individual independence and relational dependence to include consideration of universal interdependence. Further, why not address the underlying attitude, motive, and values of these “transforming aspirations” as reflective of spiritual transcendence accompanying commitment for delight, realized through wonder and detachment?⁴ These aspirations and behaviors describe a third worldview identifying individual well-being with respect to universal interdependence.

These three perspectives—the rational, the emotional, and the spiritual—represent three different sets of aspirations and behavioral determinants of personal well-being which comport well with moral intuition, the innate sense of justice and right that we bring to bear on our decision-making processes and our behaviors and which guide our actions in relation to others.

The first focuses on the person as primarily autonomous and independent, as located at the very heart and center of the universe and as asking the question “what can you do for me?” In *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, the novelist Dave Eggers describes this perspective:

Only here are you almost sure that you are careening on top of a big shiny globe, blurrily spinning. . . and we have been *chosen*, you see, chosen, and have been given this, it being owed to us, earned by us, all of this—the sky is blue for us, the sun makes passing cars twinkle like toys for us, the ocean undulates and churns for us, murmurs and coos to us. We are owed, see this is ours, see. [10, p. 5]

The second identifies the person as primarily concerned with, and directed towards others, placing the other at the center of the universe, asking “what can I do for you?” Carson McCullers, in *The Member of the Wedding*, describes this emotional worldview:

Yesterday, and all the twelve years of her life, she had only been Frankie. She was a person who had to walk around and do things by herself. . . Now all this was suddenly over and changed. There was her brother and the bride, and it was as though when first she saw them something she had known inside of her: *They are the we of me* [11, pp. 39–40]

The third perspective, the spiritual, is focused on “something other” than oneself, other people, and nature and assesses human experience with respect to that transcendent other, asking “what can we do for that ‘something other’”? This quote from Mark Salzman’s *Lying Awake* describes this perspective in a manner at once reflective of a commitment for delight and of the accompanying values of detachment and wonder:

⁴Tim Kasser and Richard M. Ryan, “A Dark Side of the American Dream: Correlates of Financial Success as a Central Life Aspiration,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65:2, 1993, 411. The authors describe “community feeling” in terms of “altruism” and “commitment.” They also cite Maslow’s use of the term “as a characteristic of self-actualizing people” and describe it themselves as “making the world a better place through one’s actions.” However, they also categorize it as an emotionally charged “intrinsic aspiration” without any transcendent referent.

Purify my heart and mind.
 Empty me of my own will,
 That I may be filled with Yours.
 An invisible sun
 A shock wave of pure Being
 Swept my pain away, swept everything away
 Until all that was left was God.
 We hang suspended in His love
 Perfect affirmation,
 Perfect understanding,
 Perfect silence:
 Your love, dear God, in full voice [12, p. 7].

These three perspectives are not confined to psychological and philosophical scholarship or contemporary fiction. They are also evident in popular modern music, specifically in Bruce Springsteen's music and lyrics. They also surface in American business where they are readily discernable in interviews with David Ferrairo who owns and manages a small New England metal plating company.

Moving from scholarship, through literature, then to music, and finally into business, we are also moving from a more conceptual to a more experiential recognition of the interplay of these three perspectives. That recognition occurs precisely where personal experience influences personal consciousness, informs personal conscience, and translates into practical behavior.

We are also moving into an acknowledgement that ethical discourse need not always be pursued through grand theories or comprehensive models. It can also be pursued from the direct testimony and witness of people who have struggled with these concerns throughout their lives and who, gradually and incrementally, refine their ethical thought and practice with appeal to rational, emotional, and spiritual aspirations and behavioral determinants. We can see ethics deriving from action and theory emerging from praxis.

Bruce Springsteen's [9] *Greatest Hits* collection is an autobiographical reflection on changing moral and ethical sensibilities.⁵ With disquieting and disturbing images, accompanied by deliberate, hard-hitting instrumentals and vocals, he reveals his own moral development, moving through three periods or stages as he searches for personal and ethical well-being: first, the aspirations and behavioral determinants of individual self-interest; second, those driven towards affiliation with people of his own place and time; and third, an appeal to universal transcendence readily translated into an appreciation of the common good. He seems to be asking, "What has the American Dream done to me?" and "What can I do about it for myself?"

David Ferrairo, entrepreneur and founder of DynaChrome, a small metal plating company in northeast Massachusetts, illustrates the transformative role played by organizational leaders who are committed to combining a focus on people, planet,

⁵ Bruce Springsteen, *Greatest Hits* (New York: Columbia Records, 1995) [9]. The songs of this album are presented in chronological order of release, beginning in 1974 with "Born to Run" and ending in 1995 with "This Hard Land." And accompanying booklet provides lyrics for each of the songs which are also readily accessed through any number of one-line sites.

and profit (the phrase profit, people, and planet first appeared on a report on social entrepreneurship by the Dutch Social-Economic Planning Council in 2000) in their daily lives. Of the same generation as Springsteen and from a similar, working-class background, Dave has experienced a similar development. Since 1990, Dave has grown his own opus, suffered defeats, and risen again. His development, and that of his organization, parallels the three levels expressed above. Beginning with the self-interest necessary for an entrepreneur to succeed, Dave moved DynaChrome through successive shifts from affiliation with individuals and groups to a caring concern for the environment and for others as yet unknown to him. He seems determined not to succumb to the temptations of the traditional American Dream.

8.2 Bruce Springsteen: *Greatest Hits* and Individual Independence

In the first song of his *Greatest Hits* album, “Born to Run,” Springsteen alludes to the American Dream, but with a graphic sense of urgency, “In the day we sweat it out in the streets of a runaway American Dream.” Driving his “chrome-wheeled, fuel-injected” motorcycle along New Jersey’s Highway 9, heading from Freehold to Asbury Park, he passes “mansions of glory” along the streets of a town he describes as “a death trap. . . a suicide rap” which “rips the bones from your back.” In another song of this same period, “Badlands,” he sings of “trouble in the heartland,” seeing himself as “caught in a crossfire” between “the same old played out scenes” of an unidentified “dream,” to which, he claims, we can only succumb, resigned to “live it every day.” In “Born to Run,” he tells us that he’s a “scared and lonely rider.” In another song of the same period, “Thunder Road,” he sees the same fear and loneliness in others, telling Mary that “I know you’re lonely” and “scared.”

Why is it a “runaway American Dream?” Is it running away from him? Is its allure and appeal so illusive, so alien, that he can never hope to attain it? Or, is he running from it? Springsteen wants not only to confront his own alienation and isolation but also to escape it.

He chooses, instead, to run towards relationship and affection (with Wendy in “Born to Run,” Mary in “Thunder Road,” and an unnamed woman in “Badlands”). At the heart and center of his own universe, he envisions everyone and everything focusing towards fulfilling his own self-interest, even his intimate relationships. The women, like his motorcycle and guitar, are not only objects but possessions. They are his; they belong to him. They fulfill his vision of the American Dream: “Poor man wanna be rich/Rich man wanna be king/And a king ain’t satisfied/Till he rules everything.” Critical of the trappings of success, and of the individual alienation and isolation they represent, he seems, nevertheless, to want them for himself. What he really wants is the power that accompanies success, the power of individual independence which not only sets him apart from others but also provides the self-acceptance/autonomy and financial success/money which, as we

saw earlier, Kasser and Ryan identify as primary aspirations of the American Dream [1, p. 411].

The strong suggestion ensuing from this first period of Springsteen's music, as well as from his moral development, is the realization that this combination of aspirations and behaviors reflects the formative influences of his experience and has become inescapably determinative of his identity. Another strong implication is that individual self-interest is not only an indispensable dimension of personal identity but, accordingly, an attribute of personal well-being worthy of pursuit.

8.3 David Ferrairo: Entrepreneurship and Financial Independence

Financial independence presents the economic rationalization for a firm's existence. The role of business is to transform, and it does so in two ways. The first way is operationally. Operations take resources of some kind (raw materials, components, skill, information) and turn them into a desired result (products, services, knowledge) through the application of some process. This process, sometimes referred to as the black box because of the occasionally mysterious nature of the interaction, provides both the potential for change (the manufacturing process, the delivery system, the software application) and, presumably, a financial payback or return on investment (ROI). Why would anyone go to the effort of starting a business and not care about financial returns? This interest in returns is not really a first step in development; it is a necessary component of organizational success. However, the interest in returns must preclude other concerns in order for a business to be viable, and in such viability lies the lure of the American Dream for the entrepreneur. As Bruce Springsteen so eloquently put it: "Poor man wanna be rich/Rich man wanna be king/And a king ain't satisfied/Till he rules everything."

Kasser and Ryan are not suggesting that there is anything inherently wrong with pursuit of the American Dream's extrinsic aspirations, nor are we suggesting that there is anything wrong with pursuit of the attitude, motive, and values required of their realization. The danger arises from the limited experience, insight, and perspective of the tunnel-visioned entrepreneur that precludes him from conceiving of alternatives to ROI and extrinsic rewards. When focused internally and on individual concerns, the entrepreneur cannot envision how pursuit of these extrinsic aspirations may contribute to humanity and to personal well-being. For Kasser and Ryan, it is not a matter of dismissing the extrinsic aspirations or of overcoming competition for success, rational self-interest, or even selfishness and ambition. It is a matter of softening their impact and of recognizing balancing alternatives for the unease and distress resulting from pursuit of them alone—the loneliness and fear from which Springsteen so desperately wants to run and which Ferrairo has demonstrated how to overcome through his relationships with his partner, his employees, and his family.

8.4 Bruce Springsteen: *Greatest Hits* and Relational Dependence

Recognizing that he is entrapped by his own self-interest, Springsteen begins to pursue a different focus encompassing a different worldview. He turns to pursuing concern for others, rather than for himself, as a guiding determinant of personal well-being. Other songs on the *Greatest Hits* collection reflect this transition from a focus on self-interest to a focus on concern for others. The extrinsic aspirations of the American Dream fade into the background—along with the accompanying attitude, motive, and values—and the intrinsic aspirations become dominant and central. He becomes much more attuned to affiliation/relatedness and community feeling/helpfulness, as well as to their accompanying attitude of cooperative concern for others, motivated towards happiness, and enlisting the values of compassion and altruism.

In “My Hometown,” his focus shifts to people suffering the social anxieties of racial tension and economic depression as represented by “whitewashed windows and vacant stores.” He has fond memories of sitting on his father’s lap “in that big Buick and steer as we drove through town” during a time when neither of these difficulties were as apparent. In “Born in the U.S.A.,” Springsteen assumes the role of the Vietnam veteran, frustrated and disillusioned, with no prospects for help, even from the Veteran’s Administration, to find a job. Rather than focusing on himself and his own ambition and selfishness, he is beginning to identify with the anxiety and distress of others who had sought even the basic and rudimentary fulfillment of the American Dream’s hope and promise.

Compassion and altruism are much more evident as Springsteen becomes attuned to the values needed to realize the “intrinsic aspirations” of the American Dream. This focus on others, on affiliation and relatedness, and on fellow feeling and helpfulness draws him into a new appreciation of humanity. The etymology of the word “compassion” reflects that changing perspective: the combination of the Latin prefix *com*, meaning “with,” and the verbal participle, *patio*, referring to “suffering.” The child driving around town with his father and the Vietnam veteran are not objects of compassion; they are subjects of compassion, people with whom he suffers.

8.5 David Ferrairo and Relational Dependence: Generosity of the Soul

Dave recognized the importance of relational dependence early on. In 1990, he and his partner bought the failing metal plating shop at which they were employed from the owner who wanted to retire. According to Dave, “Fred [the owner] took a liking to me and he took every dime on paper. We paid it off in seven years.” From the start, Dave and his partner treated the employees well, so well that the men

followed DynaChrome when it moved from Rockport, MA, to its new headquarters in Lawrence, MA (a commute of 1 h each way). Dave's goal was to make it possible for everyone who worked for him be able to own their own home and send their children to a good school, just as he did: "We're all blue collar parents," explains Dave.

DynaChrome continued to grow quickly and soon moved to larger quarters in rural Seabrook, NH. Business was booming, and Dave and his partner bought new equipment and hired more electroplaters to fulfill the burgeoning requests from customers. Their new warehouse was 15,000 square feet on 3 acres of land, and the original workers from Rockport continued to commute to the new location. The factory now housed the largest chrome tank in New England—30 feet of bubbling, ominous-looking chemicals—along with multiple rectifiers and other plating tanks and a dozen workers (including Dave, Jr.) dressed in protective gear, busily working. DynaChrome had so many requests for work that they had to turn some away in order to maintain their level of ISO 9000 quality.

The inherent intrinsic satisfactions of growing a successful business operation were significant, but personal dissatisfaction with extrinsic rewards crept into the idyllic operation. After a decade of collaboration, Dave and his partner fell out over money. To Dave's dismay, he found his partner was "bleeding the company dry." His partner had become "greedy"; the more successful the company became, the "greedier" the partner became. Dave found all of his beliefs challenged by this betrayal. By the time he became aware of his partner's destructive self-interest, DynaChrome was deeply in debt and in serious trouble. Dave continued to bail out his partner until ultimately, after 2 years of struggle, DynaChrome was reorganized. As a result of the partner's runaway selfishness and ambition, the company had to be resolved. They split the company 50/50 in terms of sales and customers. Dave sold his interest in the land and physical plant in order to retire the huge debt incurred by his partner. Dave retained the name and little else. He and his son owned a business but no plant, no equipment, and no employees, and they felt sorely the loss of trust they had experienced.

Nearly concurrent with this process was an echoing experience. With a pained look, Dave recounts the story of Raul, another story of trust and misplaced confidence that paralleled the story of Dave and his partner.

While DynaChrome was still in Lawrence, located near a tenement, a young boy of nine or ten appeared at the plant door 1 day, looking for a part-time job. There's always more tasks than time and labor to do them in a small business, so Dave gave Raul some work and "a few bucks." The two developed a close relationship, with Dave mentoring Raul and helping out his family at holidays. With no privacy at home, Raul went straight to DynaChrome each day after school and did his homework there. Dave promised him a car and college tuition if he finished high school, stayed away from gangs, and didn't get any girl pregnant.

Wistfully, Dave told the bittersweet story of watching the new courthouse being built with Raul 1 day. He believed Raul would have made a great lawyer and he told the boy, "Look—they're building your office." But, when DynaChrome moved to Seabrook, the two grew apart in more ways than geographically. Dave's influence

diminished and, in late 2003, as DynaChrome was being divided up by Dave and his partner, Raul called and said he was in a bit of trouble with the police. When they met for dinner, Raul had pierced lips and gang tattoos. Regretfully, Dave told him “There’s nothing more I can do for you—your best bet at this point would be to enlist.” Raul never showed up for the appointments he made with the military. Raul’s failure became Dave’s failure. Years later, the story still makes Dave wince. “There’s almost no way to make it [out of the barrio]. Raul had no role models—his father left him and his step-father left him. I feel a terrible sense of guilt.”

The focus on others, the altruism, and the compassion shown by Dave reflect the second stage of personal well-being and good ethics—concern for people, appreciation of relatedness, and desire for affiliation.

8.6 Bruce Springsteen: *The Rising* and Spiritual Interdependence

In “Better Days,” Springsteen tells us “my soul checked out missing as I sat listening/to the hours and minutes tickin’ away.” He realizes that without “soul,” he has been “just sittin’ around waitin’ for my life to begin/While it was just slippin’ away.” This absence of soul has left him “tired of waitin’ for tomorrow to come/or that train to come roarin’ ‘round the bend.”

For Springsteen, “soul” appears attached neither to transcendent divinity nor to faith in God, or a god, or the gods, at least in any explicit reference to a revealed religious tradition. At the same time, though, we find that the “soul” does not represent an extension of relational fellow feeling or affiliation into an ever-broadening context. Neither theological nor psychological, the “soul” for which Springsteen is searching seems to refer to humanity and to its inherent capacity to transcend both self-interest and immediate others’ interest.

It also refers to an inherent human capacity for transformation, for progressing from self-interest, through others’ interest, to an all-embracing, universal, even “transcendent,” appreciation of humanity. In the *Greatest Hits* collection, especially in “Blood Brothers,” Springsteen’s words and images reflect that transformational development. Speaking on the phone, reminiscing with a childhood friend, he remembers playing “king of the mountain” and standing “side by side each one fightin’ for the other.” Then he tells us, “there’s so much that time, time and memory fade away.” He’s moved on from the self-interest of individual independence as well as from the concern for others of relational dependence. But, to what has he moved? He tells us, he is moving from “the hardness of the world. . . grindin’ your dreams away. . . making a fool’s joke of the promises we make” and into “the stars. . . burnin’ bright like some mystery uncovered.”

That “mystery uncovered” reveals an own motivating drive towards delight. For Springsteen, “delight” is attunement to a universal, individually and relationally transcending appreciation for the well-being of all humanity. It also corresponds to

an attitude of commitment focused on interdependence. Here, the word “commitment” is used in its etymological sense (from the Latin prefix *com*, meaning “with,” and the verb *mittere*, meaning “to send out”) and reflects Springsteen wanting to move out with others, all others, towards human interdependence.

But, how will this “transforming aspiration” be recognized and realized? How will we know it when we see it? For Springsteen, as reflected in words and music, it will become apparent through realization of the same principles described by Susan Stabile in her examination of the *Compendium of Catholic Social Thought*, especially in her discussion of the relationships among human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good.

What is “the common good?” According to Stabile and Christian Social Doctrine, it is “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily” [13, p. 8, *Gaudium et spes*, p. 26]. Focusing on “the dignity of the human person,” Stabile reflects appreciation for universal human interconnection and community. “That individuals have dignity does not lead to the promotion of individualism,” she writes, “but to the notion of living and existing in community” [13, p. 8]. That relational quality is also addressed with respect to “the common good,” where, assuming transcendent universality, it becomes a matter not only of “the good of each person” but also of “the well being of the human person” determined by and “connected to the good of others” [13, p. 8]. It also dismisses any discrimination based on “race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, achievement” [13, p. 7].

This appreciation of the common good, especially when tied to an appreciation of human dignity, is not simply a matter of emotional connection but of spiritual interconnection. As such it is completely and totally removed from utility and control and from using others to enhance one’s own self-interest or being used by others to meet their expectations. It is detached from utility and control.

This detachment becomes especially apparent in the songs of *The Rising*. Released in 2002, Springsteen’s [14] song “Into the Fire” describes a fire fighter striving and dying to save people in the World Trade Center, sacrificing and surpassing immediate human intimacy because “love and duty called you someplace higher.” Actually, he’s suggesting that only faith, love, and hope inform the strength needed to restore the “soul that checked out missing.” Springsteen prays to the firefighter: “May your strength give us strength/May your faith give us faith/May your hope give us hope/May your love bring us love.” This prayer, however, is not addressed to the God of Jesus, or that of Moses, or that of Mohammed. It is, rather, addressed to humanity itself, represented by the firefighter. Why appeal to God, he seems to be asking, when we have within and among ourselves the capacity and resources—the strength—to realize faith, love, and hope in our own world?

This is an appeal to the principle of subsidiarity that Stabile describes. She quotes Pius XI’s claim “that one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to the community what they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry.” She continues the quote: “So, too, it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil

and disturbance of right order to transfer to the larger and higher collectivity functions which can be performed and provided by lesser and subordinate bodies. . .” [13, p. 9, *Quadragesimo anno*, p. 79].

Stabile describes subsidiarity with respect to government intervention, presumably civil governments because “they can easily ignore people participating in the formulation and achievement of aspirations” [13, p. 10]. Springsteen seems to agree, suggesting that people, on their own—perhaps because of his persuasive influence and urging—can achieve this appreciation of universal interdependence and work towards realization of its ideals of social justice and economic sustainability.

8.7 Dave Ferrairo: DynaChrome and Universal Interdependence

“I am a spiritual man,” says Dave, “not a religious one. Religion does some bad things—it leaves me with the ‘why’ of things that seem unfair. Some people want things from God that you should go out and get yourself.” As for Springsteen, Dave’s sense of spirituality is linked to humanity, to personal responsibility, and to transformation of self and of others.

Metal plating is one of the top five most highly regulated industries in the USA. It is dangerous, can result in poisonous by-products, and has the potential to create large-scale pollution. It is an industry where environmental regulations are sometimes ignored, yet Dave has never incurred an EPA violation. He is more than 100 % in compliance with all the regulations regarding clean air, clean water, and worker safety. Why? Dave explains, “When I started, there was no EPA and no way to process waste. There was no technology dedicated to this. It was common practice to dump cyanide directly into the sewer and then to the river. But things have changed. We practice evaporation as opposed to running water—when you treat waste water, you’re still creating hazardous waste. But our water is completely recycled back into the plating process. It reduces my chromic acid purchases (I learned afterwards) because a good percentage goes right back into the bath.” This serendipitous discovery amplified the reduced impact on the environment created by careful environmental practices.

This realization did not come immediately to Dave Ferrairo. At first, he viewed the demands of the regulatory agencies as an unwarranted imposition on doing business, particularly because of the time, energy, and money needed for implementation. However, Dave approached this challenge seriously, reading and understanding not only the legal mandates, but intuitively grasped their implications for his own personal well-being, that of all of his employees, and especially for the common good. He committed the resources of his company to transformational interdependence.

The fate of the planet is a shared responsibility; according to John Elkington [15], all businesses should be thinking and acting in terms of a triple bottom line: economics, environment, and social justice. Environmental sustainability addresses both protection of natural wealth (trees, water, air, etc.) and the renewability of sensitive ecosystems. In particular, businesses need to be concerned with “the life-cycle impacts of products; energy, materials, and water usage at production sites; potentially polluting emissions; environmental hazards and risks; waste generation; consumption of critical natural capital. . .” (577). DynaChrome takes its stewardship responsibilities seriously in its appreciation of the common good.

One of the reasons that Dave gave up on his partner was because of the vast differences between the two of them in terms of ethics and smart business practices. Dave adhered to the principle of self-discipline; that is, live on your paycheck, and at the end of the fiscal year, decide what to do with the excess. His partner maintained a different set of values, values that were more self-interested than concerned for others. Dave’s concern for the common good demanded something different.

As Robert G. Kennedy states, “A business firm, then, realizes its potential not simply when it conforms to the criteria of efficiency and effectiveness (though it certainly must do this), but when it also becomes a real human community and contributes to the genuine development of the persons who participate in its activities” [16, p. 59]. Everyone who works for DynaChrome came in as an unskilled laborer, and they have worked their way up from \$8.00/h to \$35.00/h. At present, they are all skilled technicians and could leave at any time for another position; however, they are satisfied with their pay and with their working conditions. Dave trained them all, and he feels a sense of responsibility to them. He is not only concerned that his workers are paid what they’re worth but, by extension, that all workers are paid what they’re worth.

This responsibility goes beyond the principles of solidarity and social collaboration. It speaks directly to the inherent dignity of the individual and of work, committing to the growth of others and to their personal success. The same approach plays out with his customers, who Dave describes as “loyal and confident.” It is DynaChrome’s policy not to ship any mistakes to anyone, and this requires close collaboration with the people who are doing the work. He trains his operators to do the testing prior to shipping—they know (because he has trained them to know) what each part is for and what could happen if it fails. Something as small as a bearing can have a significant impact on an airplane’s safety, for example, and an impact on the dignity of human life. Dave’s concern moves beyond the interest of his company and his own employees to a concern for the safety of all people. In an unspoken focus on subsidiarity, Dave pushes the decision-making down as far as he can, right to the operator, and as a result reduces human error to a great degree. He also builds loyalty in a way that connects social responsibility to subsidiarity.

The loyalty that Dave and his employees share has led to an exit strategy that rewards long-term employees, protects Dave, Jr., and still promises a comfortable life for Dave in the future. It also recommends that same comfort to his employees

as reflection of the inherent dignity of the worker and work. With Ron and several others who have been with him from “day one,” as he established his latest iteration of DynaChrome, this time in Newburyport, MA, Dave decided that he needed to reward the “valued employees who have contributed to the success of the company over the course of years.” He explained, “They show trust, devotion, reliability—they act like they own it. Why shouldn’t they own it?” And, as simply as that, the decision was made to sell part of the company to employees.

Proudly, he announced that he now has his first employee–owner partner and is looking forward to having others. When questioned about the response of his son, Dave said, “Dave, Jr. wants it as much as I do. He’s not greedy and he needs them and their expertise.” Dave’s spiritual, transformational perspective is becoming contagious and informing the worldviews not only of his son but of everyone involved in the business. When questioned about growth, the response is “I want to grow to a point where all parties involved have financial independence; my lifestyle is not going to change much.” Joint ownership will lead to economic sustainability and is likely to extend the life of the organization at the same time as it protects the livelihood of the employees and owners. Dave’s concern for joint ownership reflects an appreciation of the need to sacrifice one’s own self-interest for the interest of others in one’s immediate experience as well as for the interest of the common good.

But the challenges continue. We last met with Dave Ferrairo in his Newburyport plant. The conference room was raw space with sheetrock walls. Folding chairs and table comprised the furniture, and they were in the process of upgrading the electricity to 480 V to reduce kilowatt hours for the massive tank which would be installed shortly. The search for and preparation of a new factory was a significant commitment, but after the plans were under way, Enron went belly-up, and they lost 80 % of their power generation capability and, as a result, their customers. Bit by bit, DynaChrome recovered. In 2006, the market has returned to “normal.” In order to open this new plant, Dave had to sell his home and move in with his son’s family. The family considers this a benefit, as Dave can spend more time with one of his granddaughters. He has no regrets after 30 years in the metal plating business: “After 30+ years, I’m still challenged. Every day is different. And every month is a record month.”

He knows how to make the world a better place:

- Guide and encourage my grandchildren’s values.
- Satisfy my customers with quality and make a contribution to their success.
- Know and respect the consequences of product failure—insist on doing it right.

Moving from the immediate concern for his own family, through a broader concern for traditional stakeholders and into an ever-expanding concern for universal wellbeing, Dave is striving (perhaps intuitively) to enact in his own business the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good described by Stabile.

Coupling these principles with the practices that underlie corporate social responsibility creates an opportunity to move principles to action. CSR suggests multiple practices, clearly outlined in the Caux Principles, a stakeholder approach

to business, and a triple bottom line. Kyosei and human dignity—the operationalized intention to respect all people and to act in concert with their best interests—correspond to solidarity. The stakeholder approach to business requires that we consider all those affected by our actions when we make business decisions and corresponds to social collaboration. In brief, we respect the needs and interests of humanity and nature when determining our own best interest, and the triple bottom-line focus on people, profit, and planet, guides our business actions to a broader, more inclusive and responsible conclusion.

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