

Management for Professionals



Sharda S. Nandram
Puneet K. Bindlish *Editors*

Managing VUCA Through Integrative Self- Management

How to Cope with Volatility,
Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity
in Organizational Behavior

 Springer

Management for Professionals

More information about this series at <http://www.springer.com/series/10101>

Sharda S. Nandram • Puneet K. Bindlish
Editors

Managing VUCA Through Integrative Self-Management

How to Cope with Volatility,
Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity
in Organizational Behavior

 Springer

Editors

Sharda S. Nandram
Praan Group
Halfweg, The Netherlands

Puneet K. Bindlish
Praan Group
Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit
Breukelen
The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM
Banasthali Vidyapith
Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

ISSN 2192-8096

ISSN 2192-810X (electronic)

Management for Professionals

ISBN 978-3-319-52230-2

ISBN 978-3-319-52231-9 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-52231-9

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017939702

© Springer International Publishing AG 2017

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature

The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*To those who try to be the transformation
they want to see. . . See the Self, by the Self,
in the Self
(Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 6, verse 20)*

Foreword

Life Is a Journey

Surviving in a hostile world seems to have become the *Zeitgeist*. A world full of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, so much so that academicians have coined this apprehension now as the “VUCA world”. The editors have brought together in this book a wide variety of approaches and considerations from scientists from Europe, Asia, Oceania, Australia and Africa. The overview is compelling; several of the contributions are heartfelt. But then the question is, has it ever been different? Does our present time and age stand out? Is this not inherent in the structure of life itself?

Browsing through historic literature, this seems to be the case. Some religions in ascertaining this quality conclude that “life is a struggle” and all we can do is sit out this lifetime and hope for a better situation in the hereafter. Other philosophies and religions point at the relativity of this point of view—life is a struggle only at the surface level of life. The inherent structure of a VUCA outside life is the invitation or challenge to turn inward. This is what many authors indicate: there are levels of life and living, and the journey of life is to find the inner core, which is the opposite of the VUCA world. The world is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, as long as that is all there is: as a ship on a wild sea without an anchor. But if one would be able to get “grounded” and connected to the inner Self, the experience of this same VUCA world may look quite different. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and VUCA as well.

And the eye of the beholder is determined by his or her consciousness. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi says “Knowledge is structured in consciousness, and knowledge is different in different states of consciousness.” VUCA perception of the world may be the most underdeveloped state of consciousness, waking or dreaming—aching for growth and development. In development to higher states of consciousness, from transcendental through unity consciousness, VUCA is not the threat, it is a reminder and creates the necessity for development.

As such it is explained in one of the oldest and most well-known scriptures, the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Bhagavad Gita* sings the song of life; it presents Arjuna with

the most impossible choice at the battlefield of life: do not do anything and spare your relatives and friends—keep peace in a VUCA environment, or battle for righteousness and sever family ties. This was an impossible choice within the VUCA state of consciousness.

In Maharishi's commentary, it is explained that this is indeed the quintessence of life; no VUCA situation can be solved on its own level. It needs to be transcended to a higher or best the highest level: "*Nistray gunyo bhav Arjuna!*" is Krishna's most essential guidance. Maharishi explains that this indeed is the most profound lesson of the Bhagavad Gita:—be without three gunas, step out of the relative aspect of life and go towards Transcendental Consciousness. Do not try to solve the problem, any problem, on its own level. Do not perceive the world within its own context only. Step out, transcend towards the higher Self, then Nature will take over and guide you and the world to higher levels of achievement and fulfilment.

Managing VUCA through Integrative Self-Management is full with these kinds of creative insights, integrative self-management and expansion of consciousness, which makes that the current situation is evaluated from a broader perspective and eventually big problems become small problems. Volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity are not perceived anymore as unwelcome threats, but have become the ripples in warm bath, nurturing life and stimulating progress. "*Yogastah kuru karmani*"—established in Being, perform action—is Krishna's final advice to Arjuna. This is ideal living in a VUCA world.

Congratulations to Sharda and Puneet to bring all these diversities of views and thoughtful approaches together in one work.

Transcendental Meditation
Lelystad, The Netherlands

Paul Gelderloos

Words of Praise

Whole World Is a Family

The editors have played a pivotal role by being *Nimitt (enablers)* and performing their *Swadharna* (self-duty) towards the society and in particular academics through this book. Their work will initiate an important discourse on *Swavalamban* (self-reliance) and *Swaraaj* (self-freedom) in academics and society.

The important feature of the book and the editors is that they try to practice what they write, thereby leading by example. They talk about *Bharatiya* concept of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakkam* (world is a family) and put it into action in the book itself. It is wonderful to see the diversity among the authors and topics that this book covers. The way all these beads are put beautifully into a string makes this book a unique contribution. This kind of leadership is required in organizations as well as all other walks of life.

The people of the world, especially of Bharat (India) and The Netherlands, are fortunate to have academicians and researchers, who are contributing to the well-being of the world in these times of high volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). May *Bhagwan Shri Krishna* (God) bless the authors to become instruments in this pursuit of establishing *Dharma* (righteousness) on this planet.

This book is strongly recommended to people interested in performing their *Swadharna* through the field of management, governance, businesses, entrepreneurship and academics.

Faculty of Management Studies WISDOM,
Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Harsh Purohit

Preface

With divine grace, all of us get to visit many places across the world, meet variety of people and experience diverse cultures, sometimes through their worldviews. This presents each one of us an opportunity to appreciate and empathize with some of the issues that are being faced at various levels—individual, family, societal, national and global. These problems had been trying to seek the mindshare of the general public in the last many years by various scientists. They have been ringing the alarm bells for a few decades now, but they were dismissed due to people’s propensity towards listening to only convenient truths and a resistance towards change, especially the change which is very fundamental in nature. The change which may force them to change their lifestyle, how they organize their work and contribute to business models. People tried to protect their way of life and wanted everyone to conform to their views and just ignore the facts and fast approaching catastrophic events. In general, this can be attributed to our lack of physical and mental flexibility and agility too. It’s just now people have started realizing that these threats to our planet are indeed real. These problems cannot be solved by any particular or specific group. These problems are not political, which few world leaders can sit across a table and find a solution. But a solution has to be found holistically and to be worked upon by everyone irrespective of their origin or affiliation. To conceptualize the context better, academicians have suggested VUCA as a framework, which stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. This is a good beginning, as consensus on understanding of issues is being built among researchers. Ancient system of Ayurveda views any disease as a tree and stresses on the fact that if you want to cure an ailment, you first have to understand the root cause and find a medicine for the root to cure the disease. Fundamentally, we believe that an integrative worldview is a prerequisite to sustainably address the issues in VUCA context. Further, this worldview would help us see these issues as opportunities of raising our consciousness as an individual and civilization.

The book is written in response to the call towards a better world by focusing on an integrative worldview, manifested in a new way of organizing “Integrative Self-Management”. This publication is intended to inspire the researchers and academicians to creatively integrate their perspectives on issues and solutions at fundamental levels. As editors, we have attempted to make sure that the framework, in which these contributions are collated, does not impact the original perspective

of the contributor. Ample care has been taken to make sure that the contributions are not force fit into a rigid structure by clipping some of the valuable research in the process.

The book has 21 chapters with the following authors across the globe: Nicoletta Acatrinei (Switzerland), Anindo Bhattacharjee (India), Luk Bouckaert (Belgium), Alain Guiette (Belgium), Elisabeth Hense (Netherlands), Maria Humphries-Kil (New Zealand), Veenus Jain (India), Nazarina Jamil (New Zealand), Ankur Joshi (India), Wendelin Küpers (Germany), Gyöngyi Major (Hungary), Alka Maurya (India), Michal Michalski (Poland), Girish Momaya (Netherlands), Hendrik Opdebeeck (Belgium), Bronwen Rees (UK), Shankar Sankaran (Australia), Gita Sankaran (Australia), Gurinder Singh (India), Sandeep Singh (India), Pawan Kumar Singh (India), Koen Vandenbempt (Belgium), Arnold Smit (South Africa) and Doirean Wilson (UK).

We would like to thank all these authors for their contributions to the theme “How to manage the VUCA world”. In particular, we like to thank the European SPES Institute, where these thoughts took shape during the 2015 annual SPES conference in Amsterdam. We are grateful to the organizations who have been supportive of our research in the past and to have accorded us an opportunity to discuss the VUCA issues and share spiritual wisdom from an integrative paradigm: European SPES Institute, Buurtzorg Nederland, Management Development Institute (MDI), Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Banasthali Vidhyapith, IFIM Business School, Amity University and Department of Management Studies at IIT Delhi. More so, we are indebted to them also because they regarded this topic important for the society and world alike. We would like to thank entrepreneurs, students and scholars from various countries who have attended those lectures and discussions on this subject in the past and contributed to the refinement of various thoughts by asking questions. We would like to thank Professor Harsh Purohit, dean at Banasthali Vidhyapith from India, for writing his feedback on this book, and Paul Gelderloos from the Netherlands for writing the foreword and sharing his experiences as entrepreneur in dealing with the VUCA world, during the SPES Annual Conference.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands
October 09, 2016

Sharda S. Nandram
Puneet K. Bindlish

Contents

Part I Swadharma: Self-Righteousness: Towards Intrinsic Guidance by Our Inner Life

Introduction to VUCA	3
Sharda S. Nandram and Puneet K. Bindlish	
Spiritual Discernment as a Method of Judgment	15
Luk Bouckaert	
Perspectives of Saint John Chrysostom for the VUCA World	27
Nicoleta Acatrinei	
Making Sense of Organizational Change in Times of Dynamic Complexity: Change Managerialism and Reflexivity	45
Alain Guiette and Koen Vandenbempt	
Living and Leading in a VUCA World: Response-Ability and People of Faith	65
Nazarina Jamil and Maria Humphries-Kil	
Maintaining ‘Respect for Spirituality’ in a Secular Work Environment: A Biographical Account of the Career-Life Journey of a Black Female Practitioner of Declared Faith	81
Doirean Wilson	

Part II Swavalamban: Self-Reliance: From Sustainability to Self Reliance

Leadership in the Midst of Transition: Reflections on Self-Reliance, Responsibility and Spirituality	109
Arnold Smit	
Spirituality, Family, Socialization and People (Soft) Skills Development for a VUCA World	119
Michał A. Michalski	

Thinking Inside the Box: Applying the Theory of <i>Karma</i> to Make Boundary Judgements in Systemic Interventions	131
Shankar Sankaran and Gita Sankaran	
Rediscovering Transcendence Behind VUCA and Technology	149
Hendrik Opdebeeck	
Part III Swaraaj: Self-Freedom: Towards Meaningful Fulfillment of Life Purposes	
Karmic Leadership for a Mindful Existence	161
Anindo Bhattacharjee and Sandeep Singh	
Spirituality in Indian Organizations	171
Gurinder Singh, Alka Maurya, and Veenus Jain	
Organisation Development in the Point of Intersection of Competencies and Performance Potentials	183
Gyöngyi Major	
The Use of Mindfulness in a Traumatic VUCA World	193
Bronwen Rees	
Part IV Integrativeness	
Spirituality in Management Education for Building Integrated Self: Insights from Sanskrit Scriptures	209
Pawan Kumar Singh	
The Embodied Inter-be(com)ing of Spirituality: The In-Between as Spiritual Sphere in Practically Wise Organizations	229
Wendelin Küpers	
Simplicity in Dutch Initiatives on Food, Care and Money	249
Elisabeth Hense	
Integrating Simplification Theory for Navigating the VUCA: The Case of Buurtzorg Nederland	263
Sharda S. Nandram	
Three Pillars of Enlightened Individual Life and Their Realization Through the Practice of Transcendental Meditation	289
Girish Momaya	
Listening to Your Intuition: An Integrative Approach to Navigating VUCA	307
Sharda S. Nandram and Puneet K. Bindlish	

**Integrativeness Through Pursuing Integrative Intelligence
as the Way Forward** 321
Puneet K. Bindlish, Sharda S. Nandram, and Ankur Joshi

Index 331

Editors and Contributors

About the Editors



Puneet K. Bindlish is a Fellow of Management (Organizational Behaviour area) from MDI, Gurgaon, Bharat, and an engineer from prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) specializing in Mining Engineering. His doctoral research was on “*Defining Leadership: Towards Integrative Conceptualization*”. He is co-founder of Praan Group. Owing to his multidisciplinary orientation, he pursued a Postgraduate Diploma in Yog and Naturopathy, where his thesis was on “*Leadership Development through Yog*”. His topics of interests are fundamental aspects of leadership viz. its conceptualization and indigenous research paradigms for scholar practitioners of leadership.

He publishes his work in scholarly as well as practitioner-oriented outlets.

His industry experience spans around a decade, working for both small and large enterprises in Bharat and overseas. He humbly attributes his present set of inculcated skills to organizations like e-enable, Infosys, Oracle, Wipro, PNC Bank and UCLA Medical Center, to social initiatives like IIT(BHU) Alumni Associations, Svechha Foundation and to his co-founding teams in entrepreneurial ventures—Calance, Infogile. During this experience, he was appreciated for his abilities of Leadership, Mentoring, Technology, Entrepreneurship and Product Management. He was among the eight finalists in Tie-Canaan-CNBC Entrepreneurial Challenge, 2008, for his venture Infogile Technologies.

He has been invited for lectures, talks, judging and panel discussions in diverse areas like Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Health and Medicine, Traditional knowledge systems in Management including Business Communication, Technology and Product Management. Notable among them were from Nyenrode Business University, Nyenrode New Business School, IIT (BHU), MDI, IIM-Calcutta, IIM-Rohtak, Banasthali Vidyapith, Institute of Government Accounts and Finance (INGAF),

National Entrepreneurship Network (NEN), Pearl School of Business (PSB), Startup Leadership Program (SLP), MTS Telecom and Bharti Vidya Bhawan. With good national and international exposure, he has acquired comfort level with diverse cultures.



Sharda S. Nandram is a Dutch resident, born in Suriname, a person of Indian origin, the third-generation immigrant hailing from Jodhpur, Rajasthan. She is co-founder of Praan Group, co-founder of the OMRISE Banasthali-Buurtzorg-Praan Group research group at Banasthali Vidyapith in Jaipur, Professor at IFIM in Bangalore and Associate Professor at Nyenrode Business Universiteit in the Netherlands. Her topics of interest are Entrepreneurship, Spirituality, Organizational Innovation and Development, Leadership and Transformational Learning. Sharda has two

bachelor's and two masters' degrees to her credit. One in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Amsterdam and the other in General Economics at the University of Amsterdam. She did her PhD in Social Sciences from the Vrije University of Amsterdam.

Sharda has an international orientation and exposure. In her former positions, she was professor of Entrepreneurship at the HAN University of Applied Sciences and Senior Researcher at the Nyenrode Forum for Economic Research and founder and president of the women council of the GOPIO Netherlands (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin). She is advisor to Skerpe Jeugd (an academy for sports and mental skills development of young athletes).

Furthermore, she guides the implementations of alternative economic models and spiritual practices for Businesses in various countries for several types of clients. She is board member of the Steering Committee of the European SPES Institute. Her popular published books include *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland* (2015, Springer), *The Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Essence of Entrepreneurship Through Personal Stories* (2006, Springer) and *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (2010, Springer).

Contributors

Nicoleta Acatrinei Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative, Princeton, NJ, USA

Center for the Study of Religion, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA

Anindo Bhattacharjee Cabin 751, ASM-SOC, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Puneet K. Bindlish Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Luk Bouckaert European SPES Institute, OUD Heverlee, Belgium

Paul Gelderloos Transcendental Meditation, Lelystad, The Netherlands

Alain Guiette Department of Management, Universiteit Antwerpen, Prinsstraat, Antwerpen, Belgium

Elisabeth Hense Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Maria Humphries-Kil Waikato Management School, Hamilton, New Zealand

Veenus Jain Amity University, Noida, UP, India

Nazarina Jamil Waikato Management School, Hamilton, New Zealand

Labuan Faculty of International Finance, Universiti Malaysia Sabah Labuan International Campus, Labuan Federal Territory, Malaysia

Ankur Joshi Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Wendelin Küpers Karlshochschule International University, Karlsruhe, Germany

Gyöngyi Major Institute for Strategic Research, Budapest, Hungary

Alka Maurya Amity University, Noida, UP, India

Michał A. Michalski Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland

Girish Momaya MERU, Vlodrop, The Netherlands

Sharda S. Nandram Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Hendrik Opdebeeck Center for Ethics, Universiteit Antwerpen, Antwerpen, Belgium

Harsh Purohit Faculty of Management Studies, WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Bronwen Rees Founder Incubatio, Thatched Cottage, Sudbury, UK

Gita Sankaran Australian Doctor Magazine, Eastwood, NSW, Australia

Shankar Sankaran University of Technology Sydney, Eastwood, NSW, Australia

Gurinder Singh Amity University, Noida, UP, India

Pawan Kumar Singh Indian Institute of Management Indore, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

Sandeep Singh Cabin 751, ASM-SOC, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Arnold Smit University of Stellenbosch Business School, Belville, South Africa

Koen Vandembemt Department of Management, Universiteit Antwerpen, Prinsstraat, Antwerpen, Belgium

Antwerp Management School, Sint-Jacobsmarkt, Antwerp, Belgium

Doirean Wilson Middlesex University Business School London, Hendon, UK

List of Abbreviations

AoL	Art of living
AR	Action research
CBO	Community-based organization
CCL	Centre for Creative Leadership
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IST	Integrating simplification theory
IQ	Intelligence quotient
MDG	Millennium development goals
PAR	Participatory action research
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SQ	Spiritual quotient
TM	Transcendental meditation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
VUCA	Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

Part I

**Swadharma: Self-Righteousness: Towards
Intrinsic Guidance by Our Inner Life**

Introduction to VUCA

Sharda S. Nandram and Puneet K. Bindlish

...World had been, and will always keep changing, but remaining always invisible to us. The “change”, as in dominant discourse, is a hyper reality by those who would benefit from the feeling of instability...

1 Understanding VUCA

What do we know about VUCA? *Volatility*: changes occur in a high speed; *Uncertainty*: deterministic models that were appropriate for giving solutions do not work; *Complexity*: the access to the global world has made it easy to connect to every part of the world, yet it has become very complex; *Ambiguity*: there are several views to give meaning to things that happen around us. There is hardly one way for explaining a certain event. People bring in their own cultural backgrounds to the table. The term VUCA was first coined at the Army War College, which is the graduate school for future generals (Johansen and Euchner 2013). It was introduced in the entrepreneurship context by Thomas Friedman, New York Times columnist. He analyzed high-tech companies and concluded that, those companies who fail, did so because they were dominated by the technological opportunities that were available. Those who are successful such as Apple, Google, 3 M and Amazon, seem to be able to adapt and were able to implement technology in a high speed. The VUCA prime was developed by Bob Johansen (Lawrence 2013) consisting of skills

S.S. Nandram (✉)

Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

e-mail: sharda@praan.nl

P.K. Bindlish

Praan Group, Bovenpolderweg 1, 1165 LH, Halfweg, The Netherlands

and abilities that can be used as a blueprint for creating leadership development plans. Whether VUCA is just part of the game of business or a specific characteristic of the current era has been questioned and is debatable. Johansen and Euchner (2013) mention that maybe there were VUCA worlds periods before but the scale, intensity and the speed is unprecedented illustrating that global climate debates may have started in the 80'ties but compared to the current debates we could notice the intensity and scale it is being discussed and the urge to come up with solutions is higher now. Sullivan (2012) shows that half of the most turbulent financial quarters during the past 30 years have occurred since 2002. The financial turbulence has increased in intensity and persists longer than in the past. Lawrence (2013) mentions digitization, connectivity, trade liberalization, global competition and business model innovation as other drivers of turbulence.

2 Integrative Self-Management as a Way Forward

In this book it is being suggested that facing VUCA requires to decrease the perception of uncertainty by nourishing the inner landscape by self-empowerment through integrative Self-Management. It also suggests reducing complexity and ambiguity by simplification in structures and by embracing volatility as a norm rather than an exception. Integrative Self-Management has been explained through three pillars: Self-Righteousness, Self-Reliance, and Self-Freedom:

Swadharna (Self-Righteousness): is the process of acknowledging the existence of an inner life and let one being intrinsically guided by the several expressions of this inner life. It addresses questions like what is right for the organization in its given context? What is right for the organization at a particular period in its development and growth?

Swavalamban (Self-Reliance): is the process of orienting behaviors in such a way that one reduces the dependency upon others and situations and is able to regulate oneself towards the striving of independence in any type of situation. This tenet addresses—what are the actions for becoming and maintaining a situation of independence from what competitors do? What policy regulates and prescribes as a given, while remaining close to its own identity and organizational culture? How to mobilize the resources that are required given the path of righteousness?

Swaraaj (Self-Freedom): is the process of becoming aware of one's life purposes and act towards a meaningful fulfilment of these purposes. What is the higher purpose and how to follow this while being in harmony with the external demands.

Inspired by the teachings of (an ancient teacher) Kautilya's Arthashastra, *ruling, governing or controlling* is required only for people who do not exhibit Self-Righteousness. And further, for governing, an organization has to commit significant resources to manage and ensure righteousness. As per Kautilya, the policies, regulations, external rewards and punishments are required only for those who do

not have Self-Righteousness. These things take away precious resources and time, that otherwise would have spent in strategic growth and nourishment of the organization. Most importantly, the focus gradually shifts from pursuing governance to managing the government (or the bureaucratic structure). The need for governing reduces with increasing degree of self-management. It has an impact on the cost of government and governance in any institution. Our research (Nandram 2015) shows that the overall cost to sustain a Self-Managed organization will also be lower if these three pillars of Self-Management gets executed, regardless of the type of organization. Sustainability of outcomes is built into the process of this framework, as it is reflected in the inculcation of natural tendency for self-management among stakeholders, who are involved in the process of organizing.

Some businesses may choose to live in denial, but largely organizations have acknowledged the VUCA characteristics of the dynamic environment they are in. This environment has presented various challenges for businesses. But, there are very few organizations and thinkers, who see these challenges as exciting opportunities. The common quality of this selective group is that they are enterprising and innovative. They leverage on the value of diversity, interconnectedness, universal human values, a sense of belongingness, transparency and distributed leadership. *Globalization* has put significant pressure on leadership across the company levels, requiring *rapid decision making*, necessary *protection of the culture* and worldview of the organization, abilities to *integrate diversities* of various kinds, foster *collaborative innovation* with the speed appropriate for the given context. These leaders are typically well rooted in their local or organization culture and inculcating a global outlook in an integrative manner without wasting resources on brooding on the dichotomies of local and global. They integrate a double bottom line of business, social and financial, expressed as *humane and efficient*. They bring about any change through a coordinated set of actions inspired by a *collective consciousness*. Their focus is on developing and nourishing their *worldview in an integrative and holistic manner* in order to make the best use of the *VUCA opportunities in this dynamic environment*.

A proactive, innovative and creative role is required to cope with VUCA:

- To navigate through the VUCA challenges—sluggish decision making, lack of preparedness for uncertain events, unsustainable handling of growing complexity—both internal and external, dampening spirit and speed of innovation. This leads to Self-Righteousness in decision making.
- To avoid disintegration in primary organization's processes due to present systemic response to VUCA. This leads to Self-Freedom.
- To avoid any kind of wastage (in time spent, money and material) in handling unnecessary complexity in realizing organization goals. This leads to Self-Reliance.
- To make the best use of opportunities presented by VUCA in a diverse global context. This leads to Self-Reliance.
- To overcome limitations of implementing Self-Managed resilient structures without a strategic framework. This leads to Self-Righteousness.
- To overcome the struggle for balancing mindlessness and mindfulness activities. This leads to Self-Righteousness

- To balance the local and global aspirations—managing degree of openness of organization’s ecosystem to the outside world. This leads to Self-Freedom.
- To inculcate the required *Zeitgeber Focus (attunement to relevant stakeholders)* in the organization DNA. This leads to Self-Freedom.
- To integrate the individual and organization aspirations of growth and meaningfulness. This leads to Self-Freedom.
- To distribute the leadership worldview across the organization—a mandatory requirement for evolving into a responsive organization. This leads to Self-Righteousness.

In this book we propose that the best way forward is *Integrative Self-Management*. It simplifies and clarifies the organizing structure, it decreases the complexity of human dynamics of management control, and it creates space for flexibility and thereby, provides an efficient, swift, adaptive organization with the dynamic capability to respond to the diverse needs of the customers. It fosters the development of a common language to issues in the organization which are grounded and close to the daily experiential practices of customers. Furthermore, among employees it enhances meaning, purpose at work, and belongingness as main antecedents for both individual and organizational growth and development.

3 Structure of the Book

In this book we address the three pillars of Integrative Self-Management and how they are expressed in organization behavior. This provides inspiration for organization design and development as well as how to structure the tasks in the organization. Each chapter ends with some reflective questions for the reader. These questions have been compiled by the authors in order to encourage the reader to further contemplate on the thoughts shared in the chapter and engage them with thought experiments for their specific VUCA contexts.

The book has been structured in four parts. In Part 1 we present chapters that covers the concept of Swadharma—Self-Righteousness. In Part 2 chapters are covered to explain Swavalamban—Self-Reliance. In Part 3 chapters cover the concept of Swaraaj—Self-Freedom. This does not mean that all three can only appear in exclusive ways. They can occur integrally but here the dominant concept that is being addressed in the particular chapter has been the leading criteria in positioning each chapter in the several parts of the book. The fourth part of the book addresses manifestations of an integrative approach covering these three pillars. The book concludes with reflective remarks on the phenomenon of VUCA and our approach to cope with VUCA in the context of management and entrepreneurship through an integrative paradigm.

3.1 Part 1 Swadharma

Chapter “Spiritual Discernment as a Method of Judgment” presents the thesis that *spiritual discernment* is a method to overcome some of the perplexities of the VUCA World. As a concept and practice that originated in a religious context, spiritual discernment was meant to guide difficult choices in life. The author explains how spiritual discernment may enhance judgment as a faculty that goes beyond rational decision making as it includes the concept of moral taste. This concept as explained in this chapter has its root in the theory of judgment of Hannah Arendt. Taste refers to how the world looks and sounds independent of its utility and our vital interests. It can be validated through two mechanisms. First, by representative thinking which orients us to take into account the views of those who are absent in the context where the decision is being made. Second, by exemplary validity, which is applying a good example or best practice to refer to a particular situation, person or case and from which we draw more general meaning. Spiritual discernment helps to improve decision-making and a practice of Self-Righteousness in business. The chapter has three parts: defining the concept of spiritual discernment; a philosophical foundation of spiritual discernment to Hannah Arendt’s theory of judgment; an application of spiritual discernment as a method of judgment and Self-Righteousness to the field of business ethics.

Chapter “Perspectives of Saint John Chrysostom for the VUCA World” proposes an inquiry on the spiritual teaching received by the managers of Antiquity, specifically the Pater Familias, in order to cope with the challenges of the VUCA world of Antioch and Constantinople in the fourth century in Late Roman Empire. Following the tradition of fathers of desert and fathers of church, their teacher, John Chrysostom, proposes an Integrative Mindfulness Program. This program goes beyond the classical approach of mindfulness and focuses on awareness and attention, by proposing a state of mind called *hesychia*. This is a peaceful state of mind which is the fruit of *nepsis*, the attention to one thoughts and the spiritual discernment. The classical approach of mindfulness is that it has been inspired by Buddhism and it has transformed into a secularized method of self-development based on awareness, attention, non-judgement attitude—these three components describe the classical approach of mindfulness. In this sense, the Integrative Mindfulness Program of John Chrysostom is more fundamental than the classical approach and proposes a profound inner change and not only a temporary state of mind. Through a hermeneutic approach the main structure, the objectives and the implementation of the Integrative Mindfulness Program is being presented.

Chapter “Making Sense of Organizational Change in Times of Dynamic Complexity: Change Managerialism and Reflexivity” addresses the reflexive capabilities of change implementation in a world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. It suggested the importance of sense-making abilities and presents empirical material to show how sense-making is shaped through a dynamic interplay of dominant macro-level discourse of change managerialism on the one hand, and grandiose discursive enactments and rhetoric strategies on the other hand. This interdependent play results in sense-making that is characterized by system

colonization of the sense-maker's lived reality, de-familiarization, discursive disconnection, and eventually suppression of reflexive capabilities. In the context of organizational change it seems that the managerialistic logic influences the process of sense-making, often unintentionally, by dominating those who are leading the process of change.

Chapter "Living and Leading in a VUCA World: Response-Ability and People of Faith" shows how living and leading mindfully in a VUCA world may awaken our consciousness to the entanglement of systemic injustice, in tolerance of expressions of hate and violence, the widening of wealth and well-being gaps between rich and poor, and the exacerbation of environmental degradation. The authors hold their gaze on the disturbing issues that are facing humanity and the planet, and they commit to take action through their contribution to a transformational management education. The focus is on faith traditions. All religions posit universal loving relationships. They are motivated by the call of 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions to work together for a world of compassion, peace, justice and sustainability despite our differences. They seek the potential of interfaith collaborations in living and leading in a VUCA world through translating faith and spiritual values into teachings of love and compassion. These values can be exercised in the educational content and processes we are responsible for. They urge this in the hope that these values will be extended in the post-university communities our students will engage with.

In Chapter "Maintaining 'Respect for Spirituality' in a Secular Work Environment: A Biographical Account of the Career-Life Journey of a Black Female Practitioner of Declared Faith" the importance of spirituality at the workplace is being examined through a case of a black female woman. Today's global environment bears the mark of the beast namely, Volatility Uncertainty Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA). The chapter addresses why changes are occurring in the working lives of leaders and employees who now seek to integrate their spirituality at work. Perhaps this is due to society's need for spiritual solutions to better respond to the turbulence triggered by the VUCA climate that has instigated societal, geopolitical and business changes; as a means to enable them to cope and survive. This argues why interest in spirituality, a term viewed as nebulous and with skepticism, is omnipresent and growing. Spirituality discourses span many issues, yet limited written works exist that explore it from an intersectionality perspective, regarding teaching spirituality in management programs or within businesses. A gap in knowledge of how spirituality impacts on the careers of e.g., women leaders of faith in secular work environments exists. This makes it difficult to ascertain how spirituality manifests in the management practice of such leaders. Furthermore, there is no substantive evidence to show that this issue is explored from the viewpoint of black-female-leaders who become of faith while in masculine secular environments. This chapter aims to plug these gaps by reviewing the intersectionality of discrimination regarding the sales career-life-journey of Reverend Jessica Meade.

3.2 Part 2 Swavalamban

Chapter “Leadership in the Midst of Transition: Reflections on Self-Reliance, Responsibility and Spirituality” engages with this question: what can we learn from leadership narratives in a transition context that may inform our understanding of the challenges and choices that are faced by leaders and the resources they draw, guidance and direction from a South African perspective. Insights are gained about how these leaders think about their role in business and society, and about the choices with which they are constantly confronted. Characteristic of these narratives is the presence of three creative tensions, namely maintaining global competitiveness in balance with domestic socioeconomic transformation; pursuing both merit and affirmative action in the workplace; and caring for personal well-being amid strenuous demands. The second part of the chapter looks at how Self-Reliance, responsibility and spirituality can be seen as important resources for leaders to draw from in transition zones. By applying these three concepts as interpretive lenses to the leadership narratives, we arrive at conclusions about the most appropriate support systems and development programs for leaders in times of change and transition.

Chapter “Spirituality, Family, Socialization and People (Soft) Skills Development for a VUCA World” addresses the role of socialization in family context and skills development. It means that organizations are the receivers of the output of the social interactions between the members of the family. It explores the influence of spiritual (religious) attitudes and engagement on marital situation and satisfaction which in turn strongly determine the effectiveness of socialization leading to development of employees’ skills at the workplace. This in turn will enhance Self-Reliance.

In Chapter “Thinking Inside the Box: Applying the Theory of *Karma* to Make Boundary Judgements in Systemic Interventions” the author is providing examples of issues faced during systemic interventions from the literature. Further it explores how the Indian philosophical concept of *karma* (right action) could assist the ‘thinking inside the box’ that could assist systems researchers to make boundary judgements while carrying out systemic interventions ‘outside the box’. Systems researchers often combine methodologies to carry out systemic interventions in a purposeful way and it is important when undertaking systemic interventions that researchers and practitioners engage in ‘boundary critique’. This involves making judgements on inclusion, exclusion and marginalization of stakeholders, and on the issues relating to the intervention and some argue that it is impossible for practitioners involved in systemic interventions to become neutral modelers or facilitators. They suggest that practitioners have to explicitly acknowledge these limitations and manage them while making decisions about system boundaries. They recommend that a systems approach to an intervention should include exploration of stakeholder values and boundaries for analysis, challenge marginalization and use multi-methodologies.

In Chapter “Rediscovering Transcendence Behind VUCA and Technology” the author addresses how technology dominates the VUCA challenges and what

lessons can be drawn from the teachings of Jasper, Sloterdijk and Heidegger for coping with VUCA. Volatility is expressed in the need for technological change and speed. Uncertainty as a lack of **predictability** is a central concern of technology. Complexity surrounding an institution is a constant technological challenge. Ambiguity characterizes the typical context of technology. The chapter furthermore addresses: what is wrong with our VUCA based technological development when employees feel alienated in their workplaces, experiencing a lack of meaning or spirit? In which way can we rediscover virtues like simplicity, frugality, empathy and interconnectedness?

3.3 Part 3 Swaraaj

This is the era of Big Data where the process of sense-making has become more towards understanding the microcosm of the changes around us. If we view it from a *karmic* perspective, we are so much intertwined in the action-reaction cycle that the theory of chaos including the metaphor of tornados changing tracks for flapping of butterfly wings seems plausible. Every single change in the microcosm has the potential to create a new pattern of the macrocosm evolution. But somehow we have misplaced our position of being the “change” and rather are focusing continuously on the external factors. We are constantly ignoring the “seer” within us which may actually help us in making sense of this VUCA world and understanding the *Tao* of this VUCA world.

In Chapter “Karmic Leadership for a Mindful Existence” the authors take a two-tier approach towards understanding and making a sense of this VUCA World—First tier is to understand our relation to the Universe being an individual, a “*pure existent*” in this cosmos. At this level, we are increasingly feeling baffled and confused because we are mindlessly pursuing our own ends without being conscious of how our individual actions or “*karma*” are creating ripples in the macrocosm and contributing towards a volatile and uncertain world full of ambiguous realities. The journey towards the consciousness and understanding the way behind the way of the evolution (*Tao* of the VUCA world) is through the 4Ps of Karmic leadership which constitutes the *second tier* of understanding the VUCA world.

In Chapter “Spirituality in Indian Organizations” sustainable organisational development is discussed in association with a complex and integrating culture—with an integrated soul presence. The chapter examines organisational development as a positive-amount of energy flow. By applying the concept of creating organic systems, it examines the opportunities for developing organisational intelligence, which is capable of integrating the rational, emotional and spiritual aspects alike: how consciousness, if tuned to totality, can create and operate a value creating networks of interactions. This study discusses the cornerstones of existing in the VUCA world, as depending on the deepening of self-knowledge and on experiencing the cosmic essence. This study wishes to replace the identity encapsulated in self-interest with a broader self-image, which reflects the cosmic

nature of existence; such fundamental principles are applied along which the system of society's values and can be redefined—and, hence, the concept of development can be made sustainable. The message is about how consciousness realizes the physical level of existence itself through the maintenance of self-operation and self-identity at different levels. The three pillars of realization are self-interpretation, the interpretation of existence outside the self and the system of relations between these two.

Chapter “Organisation Development in the Point of Intersection of Competencies and Performance Potentials” examines the question: how to implement best practices in business and side by side remain competitive in this fast moving VUCA world? It follows the call to introduce spirituality in business and it describes spirituality from different Indian philosophies and then examines how to create an atmosphere where employees trust employers, employers trust employees, organizations trust customers and customers trust organizations; how to build a strong organization on the foundation of “mutual trust”. More modern day organizations are now moving towards spirituality-based value system to achieve regular business goals.

Chapter “The Use of Mindfulness in a Traumatic VUCA World” shows how the conditions of VUCA can be compared with those of trauma, which if not acknowledged, can have a damaging physiological, emotional and spiritual impact. It describes how Mindfulness practices override these consequences through the process of slowing down the physiological responses and providing space for more creative responses. Based on secondary data the chapter provides an analysis of an evaluative project on Mindfulness in the mental health sector to present qualitative accounts of how Mindfulness supports employee Self-Management within these particular conditions of a VUCA environment—illuminating why and how these techniques are successful. The chapter concludes by discussing the ethical issues of introducing Mindfulness into organizations as part of the management agenda.

3.4 Part 4 Integrative-ness

Behavioral aspects of management seems incomplete without the input of the spiritual dimension, as the latter is capable of making a resilient self that is ready to combat various situations at the workplace as well as in life.

Chapter “Spirituality in Management Education for Building Integrated Self: Insights from Sanskrit Scriptures” takes the route of Sanskrit scriptures to address the spiritual dimension of managing self, managing human relations, and managing work at organization. The well-managed Self is ready to respond appropriately to the world filled with VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity).

Based on phenomenology, Chapter “The Embodied Inter-be(com)ing of Spirituality: The In-Between as Spiritual Sphere in Practically Wise Organizations” shows the significance of the body and an embodied spirituality for organizations situated in a ‘World of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity’

(VUCA). Following an integrative re-membering in relation to the nexus of ‘self-other-things’ and an enfleshed integral being in organization, Merleau-Ponty’s concept of Flesh is presented as elemental carnality and formative medium. Furthermore, this contribution discusses implications of an enfleshed spirituality in relation to an inter-practice and inter-be(com)ing in ‘organic-izations’.

Chapter “Simplicity in Dutch Initiatives on Food, Care and Money” provides several cases to show how rearranging processes help to create social and economic values. Living in a VUCA world can easily provoke feelings of unease and dissatisfaction. It has led many people to develop alternative realities and to rearrange their worlds. Against the background of the VUCA world in the Netherlands, many rearrangements have been set up, some of them relating to food, others to care or to money. After a short description of nine such Dutch rearrangements in the areas of food, care and money, the chapter addresses the following two questions: What forms of simplicity can be found in these initiatives? What benefits does the implementation of simplicity confer on our societies? What do we notice as a cultural shift in our societies?

Chapter “Integrating Simplification Theory for Navigating the VUCA: The Case of Buurtzorg Nederland” presents a field study using the grounded theory methodology for organizational innovation. The field study has been chosen to build a theoretical framework to show how organizations can navigate the VUCA world. VUCA is a concept that captures the perception of a dynamic world we live in today and which has consequences for how organizations build their organizational architecture to serve their customers. The field study shows the determinants of a holistic approach that suits the needs of the customer while putting the customer at the center of the business processes. The chosen field study hails from the community care industry, Buurtzorg Nederland usually seen as a good practice for organizational innovation as it elicits high customer satisfaction, high employee satisfaction while meeting the financial bottom line of the organization too. This chapter induces the integrating simplification theory (IST) and demonstrates three action principles, five core organizational concepts and a holistic leadership competence. These are expressed in 17 properties. Each property navigates an aspect of the VUCA concept.

Chapter “Three Pillars of Enlightened Individual Life and Their Realization Through the Practice of Transcendental Meditation” takes us through the concepts of Swadharma, Swavalamban and Swaraaj as Vedic expressions. Vedic civilization was a knowledge-based civilization. Vedic expressions carried deep, holistic and profound meanings. They expressed universal truths and evolutionary principles of natural law that meant to raise individual life to enlightenment and social life to a state of collective harmony, order and progress. Observe that these three expressions have the same prefix, ‘Swa’. To unravel the beauty and depth that lies in these expressions, this chapter explains the totality of the meaning of the expression ‘Swa’ as it was used in Vedic Science during those times. The experience and understanding of ‘Swa’—Aatma, formed the foundation of all Vedic studies. Furthermore Maharishi Mahesh Yogi’s technique of Transcendental

Meditation has been described with these three Vedic expressions and their impact on the enlightenment of the individual.

Chapter “Listening to Your Intuition: An Integrative Approach to Navigating VUCA” addresses the types of intuition and explores its use and trainability in the context of entrepreneurship for navigating VUCA. There are several definitions available for intuition in various disciplines such as psychology, philosophy and ancient wisdom literature. Since intuition is an internal process of tracing, perceiving and interpreting information, this topic usually remains outside the scope of mainstream entrepreneurship scholarly research. However, entrepreneurial intuition offers serving of various purposes in navigating VUCA situations. They use it for solving problems in their businesses, for decisions in ethical dilemmas or for creating new combinations and novelty. Based on the way information is being processed we can distinguish five types of intuition: problem solving intuition, expert intuition, intellectual intuition, moral intuition and spiritual intuition. All can be applied by entrepreneurs in different stages of the entrepreneurial life cycle. Each type may have different antecedents and its working could be different as each enhances or evokes a different source.

In the last chapter “Integrative-ness Through Pursuing Integrative Intelligence as the Way Forward”, we conclude that the way forward requires an integrative approach. Many authors, who support an integrative mindset towards the reality, see VUCA, a phenomenon highly relative to the observer’s perception of the context. If we go further with that view, we can arrive at a conclusion that if the observer’s perception is the main factor prior to VUCA, then observer’s intelligence to integrate is a good starting point to navigate for VUCA management. In this chapter, we also propose few directions towards integrative-ness for navigating VUCA in management through Integrative Intelligence.

References

- Johansen, B., & Euchner, E. (2013). Navigating the VUCA world. *Research-Technology Management*, 56(1), 10–15.
- Lawrence, K. (2013). *Developing leaders in a VUCA environment*. Retrieved October 14, 2016, from UNC Kenan Flager Business School http://www.growbold.com/2013/developing-leaders-in-a-VUCA-environment_UNC.2013.pdf
- Nandram, S. S. (2015). Theory of integrating simplification. In S. S. Nandram (Ed.), *Organizational innovation by integrating simplification* (pp. 23–43). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Sullivan, J. (2012). *VUCA: The new normal for talent management and workforce planning*. Retrieved December 30, 2014, from <http://www.ere.net/2012/01/16/VUCA-the-new-normal-for-talent-management-and-workforce-planning>

Sharda S. Nandram is Professor of Entrepreneurship and Spirituality at Nyenrode Business Universiteit, The Netherlands. She has cofounded Praan Group under which she utilizes her three decades of rich consulting experience through research in organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. She is the Founder of concepts of Integrating Simplification and Integrative Intelligence. She is well travelled with diverse cross-cultural experience through consulting, research and teaching engagements across Europe (Dutch resident), South America (Surinamese born), North America, Asia (Indian origin). She has two bachelors and two masters' degrees to her credit. One in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Amsterdam and the other in General Economics at the University of Amsterdam. She did her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the Vrije University of Amsterdam. She is a widely published researcher and an internationally acclaimed Author. Her popular published books include *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland* (2015, Springer), *The Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Essence of Entrepreneurship Through Personal Stories* (2006, Springer), *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (2010, Springer). Amidst well spread professional commitments, she equally enjoys taking care of her family—her Dutch husband and two kids (1997- and 2001-).

Puneet K. Bindlish is a consultant and an academic working in the area of Integrative Intelligence for organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. He is the Co-Founder of the concept of Integrative Intelligence at Praan Group. A widely published researcher and author, with over 15 years of rich consulting and international entrepreneurial experience across Healthcare, Telecom, Technology, Banking and Insurance, Education, Sports, Public Government sectors. Well travelled with diverse cross-cultural exposure through consulting, entrepreneurship, research and teaching engagements across Europe, North America, Asia (Indian citizen). He completed his under graduate engineering studies from prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU). He pursued his doctoral research as part of Fellow of Management, Organizational Behavior from MDI-Gurgaon.

Spiritual Discernment as a Method of Judgment

Luk Bouckaert

1 The Nature and Practice of Spiritual Discernment

In his *Spiritual Exercises* (1548) Ignatius of Loyola (the founder of the Jesuit order) distinguishes two ways of arriving at a good decision. The first relies on the *ratio*, which systematically lists the advantages and disadvantages of each option so as to weigh up what, in the long term, would be the most favorable solution. This type of consideration is what we call a cost-benefit calculus in economics. Of course the cost-benefit analysis Ignatius has in mind was not an analysis in monetary terms but a rational analysis in terms of all good and bad consequences that result from a possible choice. But besides the rational method, he mentions another method and called it (inspired by older spiritual resources) *the discernment of spirits*. Basically, this approach entails the individual examining his deeper moods and feelings when considering in his imagination the available options and discerning which of the moods associated with the options leads to an inner enlargement of the spirit (*dilatatio*) and feelings of inner peace (*consolatio*). In other words, the second approach principally emphasizes what happens with and to the individual during the process of decision-making. Because a person can easily be misled by the interpretation of his inner spirits and affections, Ignatius warns us that what at first sight seems to be a good and euphoric motivation, may lead to a disaster. The art of discerning the spirits is very subtle and needs therefore some guidance from an experienced person. Ignatius regarded the rational and spiritual approaches as complementary, but the method of spiritual discernment as being the most decisive in making choices where we are confronted with a relatively unknown and unpre-

L. Bouckaert (✉)
Waversebaan 228, 3050 OUD Heverlee, Belgium
e-mail: luk.bouckaert@kuleuven.be

dictable future. I believe that this field of spiritual-based decision-making in business remains largely unexplored.¹

The method of spiritual discernment is not restricted to individual choices in life. It can also be applied to collective and organizational decision-making. Let me give a challenging example of a collective process of spiritual discernment based on the story of nine monks from the monastery Notre-Dame de l'Atlas of Tibhirine in Algeria, belonging to the Catholic Order of the Trappists. During the Algerian civil war, they were threatened by Muslim extremists. Staying in Tibhirine implied for them running the risk of death. The alternative option was to leave Tibhirine for a safer place as the Algerian authorities wanted them to do. After a difficult process of deliberation they took the decision to stay.

On the night of 26–27 March 1996, seven from the nine monks were kidnapped by the Armed Islamic Group (*Groupe Islamique Armé*, GIA). After being held for 2 months, they were found dead in late May 1996. The circumstances of their death remain controversial. GIA said they have been executed, but in 2009, retired General François Buchwalter reported that the monks had been accidentally killed by a helicopter of the Algerian army. An impressive and poignant film *Des Hommes et des Dieux (Of Gods and Men)* has been made by Xavier Beauvois reconstructing the way the monks came to the decision to stay in the abbey. The film premiered at the [2010 Cannes Film Festival](#) where it won the *Grand Prix*, the festival's second most prestigious award. It won also a lot of other prestigious awards.

Let me just recall two impressive scenes from the film. The first one is the moment the abbot presents the monks the proposal to stay in Tibhirine as an expression of their religious commitment and as a sign of deep Christian solidarity with the local Muslim population. He asked the consent of the monks. But to his surprise, some of the monks did not agree with the proposal. One of their arguments was that they didn't elect the abbot in order to take decisions in their name. Some were ready to opt for a heroic death, others did not see the value of such a sacrifice. After all, no ethical principle obliged them to stay. Every person has a right to life, physical integrity and safety. Moreover, it was even unclear if staying was the best option as it gave the extremists an opportunity to show their power and determination. The abbot realised that a top-down *aristocratic leadership style* did not work in this context of difficult choice. Hence, he gave the monks time for deliberation and opened a space for reciprocal questioning and listening.

The second scene reconstructs the meeting where the monks gathered again to communicate their final choice. Each of them was free to stay or to leave. After having listened to their inner voice in the light of what others had said, the abbot asked them to communicate their final choice. At the end, everyone decided to stay.

¹There are of course some interesting exceptions. Daniel Goleman, author of the bestseller *Emotional Intelligence*, studied the older spiritual methods of discernment of spirits before developing his concept of emotional intelligence. His basic assumption is that feelings and emotions help us discern what really matters.

There was a deep feeling of unanimity and commitment. The inner transformation needed time and open dialogue to find its final point.

What can we learn from this decision-making process? First that a difficult decision-making process in a VUCA context does not result from the usual path of rational thinking neither in its economic form of consequential cost-benefit analysis nor in its moral form of reasoning from first ethical principles. To overcome their doubts and uncertainties, the monks questioned and listened to each other and were focused on their inner motivations, the so called *spirits* that moved them in one or another direction. They tried to discern the good and bad spirits. The second lesson to learn is that ‘discernment of the spirits’ as a decision-making method for communities and organisations needs an open and democratic leadership style.

2 Hannah Arendt’s Discovery of Judgment as a Separate Faculty of the Mind

In this section Hannah Arendt’s theory of judgment will be presented as a conceptual and philosophical framework that clarifies the *modus operandi* of spiritual discernment.

Let me first recall some key elements from Hannah Arendt’s biography in order to understand her discovery of judging as a separate faculty of the mind. Hannah (Johanna) Arendt was born into a secular family of German Jews in Linden (present-day [Hanover](#)). She grew up in [Königsberg](#), a very multicultural environment and the city of the university where Immanuel Kant wrote his famous *Critiques of Reason* and whose critical spirit deeply influenced Hannah Arendt.

At the [University of Marburg](#), she studied philosophy with *Martin Heidegger*. But more than philosophy. She embarked on a long and stormy romantic relationship with Heidegger, for which she later was criticized because of Heidegger’s support for the [Nazi Party](#) when he was rector at the [University of Freiburg](#). For her doctoral dissertation, she moved to Heidelberg where she wrote her thesis under the existentialist philosopher-psychologist *Karl Jaspers* on the concept of love in the thought of [Saint Augustine](#).

Being Jewish and involved in research on [anti-Semitism](#), she was arrested and briefly imprisoned by the [Gestapo](#) in 1933. However she could escape and left Germany for [Paris](#), where she married (after the divorce of her first marriage) the German poet and [Marxist](#) philosopher [Heinrich Blücher](#). After the German [military occupation of Northern France](#), the [Vichy regime](#) organized the deportation of foreign Jews to [concentration camps](#) in the unoccupied South of France, and she was a prisoner in one of these camps. Once again, she was able to escape after a few weeks and left France in 1941 with her husband and her mother for the United States. In the postwar period she often returned to Germany but in 1950, she became a naturalized American citizen. She served as a visiting scholar at the [Universities of California, Berkeley](#), Princeton (where she was named the first female lecturer),

Chicago, Stanford and many others. Arendt died in New York City on 4 December 1975, at age 69, of a heart attack.

Hannah Arendt has written many cutting edge books such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). But for our focus on judgment what is important is her report as a journalist of *The New Yorker* in 1961 of the [Adolf Eichmann](#) trial and 2 years later published in a book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963). In that book she raised the question of whether evil (such as Holocaust) is radical or simply a function of thoughtlessness. She came to the conclusion that the process of Eichmann illustrates the existence of a type of social evil that results from thoughtlessness, a tendency of people to obey orders and to conform to mass opinion without a critical judgment of the consequences of their actions and inaction. To capture this attitude, she coined the phrase “*the banality of evil*”. Of course in Greek tragedies, there is also a blindness to see evil but evil was never reduced to something that is trivial. On the contrary it was a tragic event due to circumstances beyond our control. In the case of Eichmann, evil was reduced to a non-tragic and non-moral event, which is part of our life but not of our responsibility.

Arendt’s discovery of the banality of evil awoke her interest in the human faculty of judging. Just as the lack of judgment leads to unthinkable evil, how can judgment be the foundation for good moral decisions? In her last and unfinished work *The Life of Mind*, she aimed at analyzing three functions of the Mind: Thinking, Willing and Judging. She finished the parts on Thinking and willing, which have been published after her death under the title *The Life of Mind* (1978). But the part on Judgment was missing. A few days before her death she had introduced a new and blank page in her typewriter with the title ‘Judging’ and two quotations. That was it. She never wrote the third part. But luckily Arendt did leave some manuscripts² and in her posthumous published *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* (1992), we find the main lines of what she meant.

In his *Critique of Judgment* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790) Kant explores the modus operandi of aesthetic judgments (first part of the book) and of teleological reasoning (second part of the book). The relation between both parts is not always obvious but it is clear that aesthetic and teleological thinking represent forms of thinking concerned with the search for meaning instead of universal truth. Hannah Arendt was convinced that with Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, this unexplored faculty of the mind became for the first time “a major topic of a major thinking” (p. 4). However, it remains a strange fact that many philosophy minded persons are familiar with the ideas of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and his *Critique of Practical Reason* but very unfamiliar with the third *Critique of Judgment*.

My aim is not to discuss here Arendt’s interpretation of Kant neither to go deeply into the exegesis of Arendt’s texts. My point is more practically oriented: what can

²Entitled “Thinking and Moral Considerations” and “Some Questions on Moral Philosophy”. Posthumously published in: Arendt H., *Responsibility and Judgment*, Schocken Books, New York, 2003.

we as business ethicists learn from Hannah Arendt's analysis? At least three points: (1) the difference between reasoning and judging; (2) a better understanding of the role of taste, imagination and feelings in judging; and (3) how to validate our feelings of taste.

3 Difference Between Reasoning and Judging

After having ended the parts on Thinking and Willing in her latest project *The Life of the Mind* (1978), Hannah Arendt wrote a post scriptum where she made clear why a third part on judging as a distinct capacity of the human mind was needed.

I shall show that my own main assumption in singling out judgment as a distinct capacity of our minds has been that judgments are not arrived at by either deduction or induction; in short, they have nothing in common with logical operations ... We shall be in search of the 'silent sense', which—when it was dealt with at all—has always, even in Kant, been thought of as taste and therefore as belonging to the realm of aesthetics. (Arendt 1978, post scriptum).

Judging is different from scientific reasoning as far as science is based on the logical operations of induction and deduction. In science we try to explain a particular event by subsuming it under a general law and to reconstruct it as a deduction from a general law.³ In inductive reasoning we try to observe as many cases as we can in order to find a general principle that can be tested on its general validity by predicting future events. In moral reasoning we do a similar thing as we do in science in order to legitimate our behavior. We try to see if our behavior can be subsumed under a general principle (Kant will call them ethical imperatives or we may call them universal human rights). If we can understand our behavior as an application of a general principle, it is morally legitimate. Kant's Critique of moral reasoning was a search to find the most general principles or moral laws that inform and legitimate moral behavior.

If we are able to subsume facts and decisions under a general principle or law, we do not need to judge issues. There is a compelling logic in deductive reasoning. But in the case of what Schumacher (2004) calls 'divergent problems', problems that find their roots in different value-perspectives and different value-commitments, there is no point of shared principles or no shared interpretation and ranking of common principles. In these contexts we have to do with particular situations that cannot be subsumed under a general principle because there is no consensus about the choice, the ranking or the interpretation of these principles. What is left is a confused spectrum of partly overlapping and partly contradictory ideas. We need another faculty than reasoning to judge the situation and to make a decision.

³E.g. the law could be that all people try to maximize happiness and minimize pain.

4 The Role of Taste, Imagination and Feelings

Originally Kant's idea was to call his third Critique the *Critique of Taste*. Contrary to the senses of seeing, hearing and touch, which present the objects of the outer world in a direct and objective way, smell and taste give us inner sensations that are private and very subjective. Smelling and tasting may give me feelings of *it-pleases-or-displeases-me* but it is difficult to communicate them in an objective way as we do for the object of the other senses. It is said: *de gustibus non disputandum est*. But at the same time, we like to communicate our judgments of taste. The imagination helps us to represent the objects which are absent as well as the feelings of pleasure and displeasure they evoke. Moreover, through empathy we can imagine and represent the feelings of other people. By sharing and testing our aesthetic judgments with other people, we can enlarge our mind and enjoy what Kant calls a 'contemplative pleasure' which is the aim of sharing aesthetic judgments.

By introducing feelings of pleasure and displeasure as a reference for judgment, Kant and Arendt run the risk to become the servants of utilitarianism. However, the aesthetic feelings of pleasure and displeasure are different from the well-known utilitarian feelings of pleasure and displeasure. The latter result from the satisfaction of our needs and the reduction of things to their functional use. The former are *disinterested*. They do not feel things as functional but as nonfunctional, as intrinsic beautiful and right in their own appearance. According to Arendt: "The activity of taste decides how this world, independent of its utility and our vital interests in it, is to look and to sound" quoted by Ronald Beiner in (Arendt 1992: 105). Kant would say it is a purely contemplative pleasure.

While Kant's analysis of taste was applied to aesthetics, Hannah Arendt was interested in extending the model of aesthetic judgment to moral and social judgment. But can we trust our subjective feelings in moral choices? Do moral taste have some general validity?

5 How to Validate Our Feelings of Taste?

Philosophers as Plato and many others made a clear distinction between 'opinions' (doksai) and 'true knowledge' (epistèmè). Opinions are not trust worthy. Philosophy as the search for truth has nothing to do with opinions. Kant as well as Arendt do not follow that idea. Although making a distinction between reasoning and judging, they rehabilitate the value of opinions and subjective statements of taste. The core argument in their defense of the philosophical value of opinions is that judgments of taste always imply *communicability* and communicability requires a community of men who can be addressed and who are listening and can be listened to. This reference to a community—at least a virtual community—is constitutive for the possibility to make a judgment of taste and to search for a *sensus communis*.

In the light of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris, the following statement of Kant is very illuminating: "It is said: the freedom to speak or to write can be taken away

from us by the powers-that-be, but the freedom to think can-not be taken from us through them at all. However, how much and how correctly would we think if we did not think in community with others to whom we communicate our thoughts and who communicate theirs to us! Hence, we may safely state that the external power which deprives man of the freedom to communicate his thoughts *publicly* also takes away his freedom to *think*, the only treasure left to us in our civic life and through which alone there may be a remedy against all evils of the present state of affairs” (Arendt 1992: 41).

The freedom to communicate is essential for Kant because it enables us to enlarge our mind and to discover a *sensus communis*. Arendt indicates two tracks to strengthen the communicability and hence the validity of judgment. The first one is to stimulate *representative thinking*. This means that I should make present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent. According to Arendt: “The more people’s standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion” (quoted by R. Beiner in Arendt 1992: 107). Representative thinking does not mean that I conform my judgment to the actual statements of the majority. “I still speak with my own voice and I do not count noses in order to arrive at what I think is right. But my judgment is no longer subjective either” (quoted by R. Beiner in Arendt 1992: 108).

The other test of validity which Arendt found in Kant is the idea of *exemplary validity*. To formulate a judgment we often use as a reference a good example or a best practice. A good example or a best practice is not a general or abstract principle. We refer to a particular situation, a particular person, a particular case. But the particular case helps us to disclose a more general meaning. “The exemplar is and remains a particular that in its very particularity reveals the generality that otherwise could not be defined. Courage is *like Achilles*” (Arendt 1992: 77). Good judgment is inspired by concrete stories and examples.

6 From Arendt’s Theory of Judgment to a Spiritual-Based Practice of Leadership

My personal interest in Arendt’s theory of judgment came from my search to find a philosophical foundation for a spiritual-based ethics of leadership. Although Arendt never uses the word ‘spiritual ethics’ or ‘spiritual-based leadership’ I believe that her theory of judgment is very supportive for this new track of leadership research. There are two links to mention. First, the source of the faculty of judging is not reason (theoretical or moral reason) but *taste* which is a meta-rational capacity of understanding things through intuition, empathy and conversation. Although taste is personal, subjective and inter-subjective, it gives us access to the non-visible and non-utilitarian meaning of things. In as far as spirituality as search for meaning is based on deep intuition, empathy and open communication and intends to disclose the inner meaning of things, it can be considered as part of our faculty of judgment.

Judging is based on the capacity of our mind to understand the beauty and inner *telos* of things.

But there is another reason too. If we look at religious traditions of spirituality, we find a lot of interesting practices of representative thinking. Looking at people as children of God is an exercise in universally oriented representative thinking. Undoubtedly, institutional religions often reduced their capacity of representative thinking to their followers and believers. Nevertheless, open religions have the potential to transcend exclusive thinking. Many genuine spiritual leaders have enlarged the horizon of representative thinking. They often did it at the cost of their own life.

All this said, there is also a difference between Arendt's theory of judgment and a theory of spiritual discernment and wisdom. Arendt's theory of judgment is conceived as a political theory promoting the democratic practice of public debate. Her horizon of representative thinking is confined to the opinions of citizens in search for a *sensus communis*. In a spiritual theory of discernment the horizon of representative thinking is not confined to the voice of citizens but open to the voice of all living beings and to being itself as a transcendent Presence. The transcendent referent refers to the Unknown, the Unsaid and the Unexpected in everything. Openness for the Transcendent makes it possible to take a distance from existing opinions and to renew and enlarge our social and political capacity of representative thinking. Therefore genuine spirituality can be considered as a lever to renew our social and political representations. Because Arendt was mainly interested in the political implications of her theory of judgment, she did not fully articulate its spiritual foundation.

Even less was she interested in the business applications of her theory? In the line of Aristotle's distinction between politics and economics, she did not consider democracy and open debate as part of business practice. Business ethics was at its best a commitment to abide with the democratic laws regulating the functioning of consumer, labour and capital markets. If we look at the interaction between politics and economics to-day, we can observe how political concepts such as citizenship, social dialogue, democracy and participation have becoming part of business ethics. And vice versa, we can see how the logic of marketing, management and markets has become part of political business.

Undoubtedly there are many examples illustrating a practice of good judgment and leadership in business. But what is missing is a good *theory* of moral judgment in business. In most *Handbooks of Business Ethics*, business behavior is called to be ethical when it can be subsumed under a general ethical principle e.g. the Kantian ethical imperative, one of the human rights principles, or the utilitarian rule of maximizing happiness. Neoliberals e.g. defending the shareholder model for business try to demonstrate that this model is the only one that is consistent with the universal rights of property and which through the mechanism of the invisible hand (the market) enables us to maximize income and welfare for everyone.

The alternative *stakeholder model* promoted by many business ethicists since the late 1970's, represents a shift in the ranking and interpretation of rights but legitimates itself through a similar procedure of moral reasoning. Its focus shifts

from property rights *sensu stricto* to an enlarged concept of property rights combined with principles of distributive justice. Because *all* stakeholders invest some capital (be it financial, human, social or spiritual capital) they can claim part of the created value and the right to participate in the decision-making process. Even society at large, which allows to operate and to create conditions for good entrepreneurship, has a claim to a part of corporate profit. Profit can no longer be claimed as the privilege of shareholders but as a common surplus value created by the cooperation of all stakeholders and to be fairly distributed among them.

When all stakeholder interests converge, a fair distribution of profit is not all too difficult. But the proof of the pudding is in the context of divergent claims, competing rights and opposite values. What to do if there is no consensus on the *meta-principles* ordering the lower ranking interests and values? In such cases an ideological dispute on principles and rights seldom creates a solution. An open, direct and empathic exchange of reciprocal feelings and intuitions is much more productive to find a viable compromise. But this is easier said than done. Although most business leaders do realize the importance of good communication, they know that the ultimate decision power belongs to the profit-minded shareholders. Corporate law in most Western countries gives precedence to the property rights of shareholders in decision-making.⁴

7 Leader as Facilitator of Good Judgment: Story of Oticon

The most vital condition to introduce a space for democratic debate in business is to transform the leadership style. The new leaders can have different names but in essence they are *facilitators of good judgment*. Their judgment is based on the principles of dialogue, representative thinking and exemplary behavior which are the ingredients of Arendt's theory of good judgment. Instead of reducing other people to followers, they install a spirit of co-creation and perceive people as co-leaders who take up personal responsibility. They assume that every reasonable person has a capacity to judge and to form a personal *opinion* about the meaning and *telos* of things. To mobilize these opinions and connect them into a *communis opinio* is the task of a democratic leader in politics as well as in business.

Instead of presenting general reflections on the concept of spiritual-based leadership, let me just give an example. My example is taken from Jenssen (1996) and illustrates the power of trust-based leadership. The example tells us the story of Oticon, a Danish company with branches worldwide that sell hearing-aids and related technologies. Until the 1990s the company was structured according to the traditional model of bureaucratic rationality: a clear hierarchical pyramid,

⁴We will not tackle here the question of democracy in business (see Bouckaert 2010a, b). It may suffice to observe that even in a non-democratic organization a dialogical style of management and leadership can flourish. And vice versa. A democratic organization can be lead by an autocratic leader applying a hierarchical style of management. Formal structures and living culture don't always coincide.

divided into departments each of which is responsible for managing its own affairs, quantitative economic goals as standards for measuring and monitoring success, emphasis on formal procedures. In the beginning of the 1990s, the dollar fell to half its value in Danish crowns. This meant a catastrophic decline in revenue for Oticon, since its most important market was in the United States. The company was facing a crisis. Meetings were held left and right, but the loss of control continued to rise. The Board of Directors pulled the emergency brake. The eight executive directors were dismissed and Lars Kolind, manager of a high tech firm (Radiometer Inc.) was hired as director.

Kolind's basic philosophy consisted in dismantling bureaucratic rationality and creating in its place a 'moral free space', a space for freedom, personal responsibility and open communication. Each person was considered to follow his own sense of righteousness and to make his own judgment. To create an appropriate context for this open communication and practice of self-righteousness, Kolind abolished all titles and departmental structures, fixed working hours, clearly defined jobs; moreover, all information apart from a few confidential details was to be made accessible to everyone. Each person could make suggestions and proposals directly to Kolind himself. If anyone did not receive a reply he or she could consider the suggestion as having been accepted, and could count on the means for realising it.

Not everyone could adapt to the Kolind style, which called for a high degree of personal judgment and creativity. Some left the company. When the group succeeded in designing a new hearing system based on digital technology, the company made a leap forward. The Kolind style had evidently released people's self-confidence and creativity. He described the core of his leadership in the following way: 'the key lies in the notion of trust. No one can resist trust. The basic assumption that guides my notion of leadership is that the personnel will only take responsibility for itself and look after the common good if management is able to create an environment that promotes trust and autonomy.' (Jenssen 1996: 26)

8 Conclusion

The main aim of Arendt's theory of judgment was to enlarge Kant's reflections on aesthetic judgment to the domain of morality and politics. She discovered a new way to restore politics after the debacle of the world wars and the holocaust. The mission of politics in her view is to open a space for public debate, for co-creativity and citizenship based on the diversity of opinions but simultaneously on the necessity to find a *communis opinio*. As Hannah Arendt extended Kant's theory of judgment from aesthetics to the moral and political domain, we can extend Arendt's theory to the field of business ethics. Instead of founding business ethics exclusively on moral reasoning guided by Kant's ethical imperatives or/and the principles of utility maximization, we may introduce *spiritual discernment* as a method to guide good judgment and self-righteousness in a context of uncertainty and difficult choices. Spiritual discernment needs a space that empowers people to express their opinions, stimulates them to reciprocal questioning and listening and

to be committed to a greater Good. Key factor to initiate this process is a democratic and spiritual-based style of leadership as we exemplified in the person of Lars Kolind. He saved Oticon from bankruptcy by transforming the company into a space of open and free communication informed by the personal judgment of its people.

Reflective Questions

1. Do you believe that feelings should play a decisive role in making good decisions?
2. How to test the validity of judgments based on subjective taste?
3. Does an open and democratic leadership style always lead to the right decisions?
4. What conditions should be fulfilled to create an inspiring context for good collective discernment and judgment?

References

- Arendt, H. (1963). *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A report on the banality of evil*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Arendt, H. (2003). *Responsibility and judgment*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Arendt, H. (1978). *The life of the mind*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Arendt, H. (1992). *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Beiner, R. (1992). Hannah Arendt on judging. In Arendt H. (Ed.), *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy* (Part 2: Interpretive essay, pp. 88–156). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bouckaert, L. (2010a). Economic democracy as a social and spiritual utopia. In L. Bouckaert & A. Pasquale (Eds.), *Respect and economic democracy* (pp. 13–29). Antwerpen: Garant.
- Bouckaert, L. (2010b). From business ethics to business spirituality: The socratic model of leadership. In S. Nandram & M. E. Borden (Eds.), *Spirituality and business. Exploring possibilities for a new management paradigm* (pp. 73–87). Heidelberg: Springer.
- Ims, K., & Pedersen, L. J. T. (2015). *Business and the greater good*. Cheltenham: Elgar publishing.
- Jenssen, F. D. (1996). *Ethics at work*. Research paper presented at EBEN Conference, Siena.
- Kant, I. (1790). *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Berlin & Libau: Lagarde & Friederich.
- Schumacher, E. F. (2004). *A guide for the perplexed*. London: Harper Perennial (first edition 1977).

Luk Bouckaert is emeritus professor of ethics at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. He is a philosopher and an economist by training. His research and publications fall within the fields of economic and business ethics and spirituality. In 1987 he founded with some colleagues the interdisciplinary Centre for Economics and Ethics at the University of Leuven. In 1999–2000 he started SPES as a study group for Spirituality in Economics and Society and in 2004 together with Laszlo Zsolnai the European SPES Forum which he chaired as president until 2014. He wrote several books in Dutch. Recent publications in English include: *Spirituality as a public good* (co-edited with L. Zsolnai, 2007), *Frugality* (co-edited with H. Opdebeeck and L. Zsolnai, 2008), *Imagine Europe* (co-edited with J. Eynikel, 2009), *Respect and Economic Democracy* (co-edited with Pasquale Arena, 2010) and *The Palgrave Handbook of Spirituality and Business* (co-edited with L. Zsolnai, 2011).

Perspectives of Saint John Chrysostom for the VUCA World

Nicoleta Acatrinei

*An Integrative Mindfulness Program to cope with the
managerial challenges in a VUCA world*

1 Introduction

We are used to think that the VUCA world is a recent phenomenon, its characteristics being specific to our post-modern era. However, if we look closely to these four traits, volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, we see that we can attribute these characteristics to other many periods of the human history. Today, these features are formalized concepts meant to help scholars to better understand and cope with these problems, but the phenomena they englobe are universal. Thus, looking in the past to find out how previous societies had already faced these situations might be of high interest and deeply relevant.

In this chapter, I propose an inquiry in the spiritual teaching of Saint John Chrysostom to Pater Familias from Antioch and Constantinople in the fourth Century. The pertinence of such an inquiry comes from the socio-economic and politic characteristics of Antioch (now Antakya, in the south-east of Turkey), which is a metropolis of Roman Empire in Middle East and a strong economic and commercial center between east and west¹. The characteristics of Antioch are the

¹Eastern part of the ancient world accessible to travelers in the first century A.D. Department of Ancient near Eastern Art. “Trade between the Romans and the Empires of Asia”. In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/silk/hd_silk.htm (October 2000).

N. Acatrinei (✉)

Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative, Princeton, NJ, 08540, USA

Center for the Study of Religion, Princeton University, 5 Ivy Lane, Princeton, NJ, 08540, USA

e-mail: Nicoleta.Acatrinei@unil.ch

same as with any big city from nowadays, a strong economic activity, a multicultural society, a high infrastructure, a political center, a high demography.

Another argument making worthy such an inquiry is the quality of the manuscripts under study, the homilies on the Gospel of Mathieu of Saint John Chrysostom. First of all, Chrysostom is preaching to Pater Familias, which are the equivalent of managers and CEOs from our days. Before becoming a monk, Chrysostom was himself a Pater Familias, he came from a very rich family from Antioch and he had to help his mother with the management of family business, thus, he knows what are the main challenges faced by his auditors (see Brown 2012 for a full analysis of society of Late Antiquity). Second, Chrysostom is practicing himself the teaching given to the Pater Familias. We have in the person and the writings of John Chrysostom an authentic and profound teaching tailored for Pater Familias and for their spiritual and managerial needs. The main purpose of Chrysostom is not the moralization of the economic activities of his auditors; he is only interested in their spiritual growth and in their accomplishment as Christians, and the management of their business is part of this accomplishment.

Mindfulness: The Antidote of VUCA World

Acting and deciding into a VUCA world was challenging in fourth century as it is today, there are the main pressures and tensions conditioning the daily life of economic actors, with the same consequences, an increased stress at work, loss of life sense, anxiety, depression, etc. Today, in order to help managers to cope with these negative consequences (Chiesa and Serretti 2009²) the concept of mindfulness came as a response offering solutions, mindfulness workshops are now proposed more and more frequently. Shortly, mindfulness is defined as the capacity of human being to experience the present moment by being open, non-judgmental, curious and accepting the present moment as it is. This mental state includes thoughts, emotions, sensations, body states and it has two main characteristics, the attention and the awareness which make possible to become mindful (Hofmann et al. 2010; Baer et al. 2006; Baer 2003; Brown and Ryan 2003; Bishop et al. 2004) with positive effects on stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn 2003, 2009; Baer 2003) and other psychological symptoms and illnesses and an increase in the well-being (Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor 2010; Brown and Ryan 2003; Davidson et al. 2003; Grossman et al. 2004; Teasdale et al. 2000).

Mindfulness training and teaching seem very new, the literature on mindfulness recently developed from an accessory approach to a fundamental concept; Kabat-Zinn (2003) mentions the usefulness of the mindfulness concept of Buddhism for Western society. Lately, being secularized, this concept become central to many types of therapies: Dialecticalbehavioral therapy, Mindfulness-Based Stress

²Chiesa A. and Serretti, A. 2009, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for Stress Management in Healthy People: A review and Meta-Analysis, in *The Journal of Alternative and complementary Medicine*, Vol. 15, Nr. 5, pp. 593–600.

Reduction, Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy (Baer et al. 2006).

However, mindfulness is not the apange of Buddhism, many other religious traditions emphasis the consciousness of self and other mindfulness characteristics in their spiritual traditions. Such a tradition is known in the Eastern Orthodox Christianity as *hesychia* and it was taught with success in the fourth century to Pater Familias from Antioch and Constantinople by Saint John Chrysostom, who inherited and lived himself this philocalic tradition.

In this contribution we deliver a quintessence of the mindfulness teaching of John Chrysostom to Pater Familias and show the main spiritual tools which are proposed by Chrysostom in order to cope with VUCA world. It is an, integrative mindfulness program meant to allow managers to be lucid and to develop their ability of discernment, of improving their decision making process and reducing stress aversion, in finding a way to reach inner peace and to nurture it continually.

The contribution is organized as following:

- Section “Why Chrysotom’s Work Is Pertinent for a Mindfulness-VUCA Analysis?” presents the arguments which make pertinent to use the antique teaching of John Chrysostom on mindfulness, both from a managerial point of view and from a spiritual one.
- Section “The Integrative Mindfulness Program” presents the three steps of the integrative mindfulness program.
- Section “Conclusions” synthetizes the teaching and concludes with advantages and benefices of the Integrative Mindfulness Program.

2 Why Chrysotom’s Work Is Pertinent for a Mindfulness-VUCA Analysis?

There are two reasons for the pertinence of the choice of Chrysostom in order to tackle VUCA world in fourth century. Chrysostom was born around the years 350 to Antioche on Oronte,³ the third city of the Roman Empire, metropolis of Syria (today the city is called Antikaya, in the southeast of Turkey). He grew up in a wealthy family and he benefited from a high level of education becoming a brilliant student. Once adult, in spite of a promising career as lawyer, Chrysostom decides to give up the world and his wealth for the monastic life, he lived in a monastery situated near Antioch on the hills of the Mountain Silpios. Later, he retired in a cave

³About Antioche : A. J. FESTUGIERE, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne*. Libanius, Chrysostome et les moines de Syrie, Bibliothèque des Ecoles Françaises d’Athènes et de Rome, Paris, 1959; C. KONDOLEON, *Antioche, the lost ancient city*, Princeton University Press, 2000; R.E. BROWM. et J.P. MEIER, *Antioche et Rome. Berceaux du christianisme*, Paris, Cerf, 1988; G. DOWNEY, *A history of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton University Press, 1961; P. PETIT, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVème siècle après J.-C.*, Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1955.

where he spent all his time fasting, praying and studying the Holy Scriptures. Chrysostom has a stunning mastery of the Bible, his homilies abundantly testify it, he became the so-called golden mouth (gr. chrysostom) and reached its perfection in the art of hermeneutics.⁴ But the big talent of the young monk John is to be considered the last great master of the Late Antiquity in the art of rhetoric. The beautiful word that Chrysostom spreads to his Pater Familias like a mother feeds her children with her milk (according to his own expression) takes its source in an authentic and deep love for humankind. This double background makes from Chrysostom an expert from a business management point of view, but also in the practice of *hesychia*. The word *hesychia* is the corner stone of this approach together with the word *nepsis*.

Thanks to his oratorical and hermeneutical talent, Chrysostom succeeded in transmitting the essential teaching of Fathers of the Desert concerning *hesychia* and the guard of mind (gr. *nepsis*) in a clear and attractive way. That's why Chrysostom writings allow us to inquire on the mindfulness training of Pater Familias.

3 The Integrative Mindfulness Program

Chrysostom starts always his speech by considering the problems exactly as viewed by the Pater Familias, his demonstration is respecting all the time their economic logic and their remarks are at the center of the analyses of Chrysostom. He is implementing a bottom-up procedure, from real life to spiritual issues and not vice-versa. This approach allows to Chrysostom to talk about economic life, first of all, from an economic point of view and secondly from a spiritual one, and he uses a vocabulary very known to Pater Familias, the economic and financial one, but also the philosophical one—the stoic themes as *the self* and *the happiness, the soul* and *the eternity* appear very often in his homilies. The Pater Familias were educated people and were used with the techniques of diatribes, and the discussions on philosophical subjects were at that time a current activity of Pater Familias.

The analysis of the homilies of Saint John Chrysostom reveals an integrative mindfulness program organized on three levels, as three concentric circles:

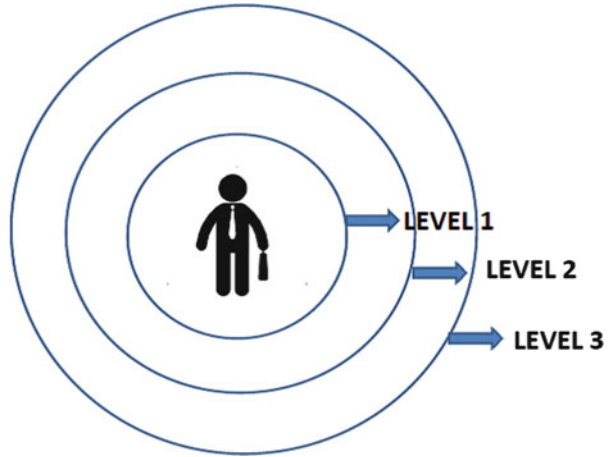
1. Level 1—the Pater Familias in regard with himself,
2. Level 2—the Pater Familias in connection with the others and
3. Level 3—the Pater Familias in his relation with God (Fig. 1).

Naturally, these perspectives are connected and influence each other mutually but we can seize for each of them specific characteristics.

Thus, in the perspective of Pater Familias analyzed in regard to his own human nature in level 1, the characteristics under study are the dignity and the nobility of

⁴Hermeneutics science—the science of interpretation of texts.

Fig. 1 Integrative mindfulness program organized on three levels



the human nature, it is a man face to face with his own human nature analysis. In the second perspective, in level 2, the Pater Familias are analyzed in their relationship with the other human beings, mainly the family, the friends, the other Pater Familias and the Roman authorities, mainly the court of the Emperor. In this perspective is the relational path that Chrysostom underlines and how Pater Familias live these relationships. The third level considers the relationship of Pater Familias with God, and it addresses the Christian spiritual dimension of the Pater Familias and how they live their faith in the practical life, these two aspects (theoreia and praxis) keeping pace at Chrysostom’s teaching. One can think that treating about the spiritual dimension only at third and last level is not appropriate, because it is the most relevant activity when one wants and needs to meditate, and consequently, it has to be the first level to be considered. However, Chrysostom shows that one cannot meditate and pray fruitfully if the soul is in disorder or when the human being is ignorant about his own human nature, about his intrinsic forces and weakness. That’s why Chrysostom teaches firstly how to acquire a solid ontological foundation which will allow Pater Familias to grow, both at spiritual and material level. Of course, Chrysostom does not use the term of “integrative mindfulness program”, however there is no difficulty to call it like this, because he is transmitting a much known monastic tradition where stages of advancement are clearly identified and an ascetic program is proposed to anyone who want to advance spiritually.

3.1 An Anthropological Anchorage

Chrysostom starts by getting Pater Familias attentive to the beauty and the excellence of their human nature. According to the chrysosostomian anthropology, which is the biblical anthropology, man was created to enjoy life, and he was made up of body and soul, this is a dichotomist perspective, but different from the

philosophical vision of man. Greek philosophy reveals a man made up of body and soul, in this dualism, only the soul is immortal, while the body perishes forever. The body has a mostly negative role in life. Man has to get rid of it in order to reach true happiness, as the body prevents him from being happy. Chrysostom's anthropology is completely different. The body is strongly bounded to the soul and they influence each other in their functioning, a healthy body influences the soul and vice-versa. Chrysostom rejects Manichean vision of a contemptible body, underlying its importance in man's life. In return, the condition of the soul shows out through the body. The diseases of the soul spoil the face and the body, while virtues beautify it. There is a strong connection body-soul and there is a hierarchy which guarantees stability, equilibrium to this connection. The soul is superior to the body. If this hierarchy is not observed, serious disorders prevent man from being happy. Thus, the human nature is dual, with interdependencies and hierarchies as seen here after in Homely 34, 5:

"Why then let go the king, and be wild about the herald? Why leave the philosopher, and gape after his interpreter?" The body is interpreter of the soul, and he is subordinated to the soul, but the body is important too, the whole relationship is determinant for happiness:

- Body—*soma* (Greek.)
- Soul—*psyche* (Greek.)
- Mind—*nous* (Greek.)

As we see, the mind, the "*nous*" is not a third part of the human being (the anthropology is not tripartite as often misunderstood in Christian theology), but it is an intellectual and cognitive capacity of the soul able to discern and finally to decide. Chrysostom ends all his homilies by praying for the happiness of people, now in this world and in eternity, and this is according to the dual anthropology he defends, happiness is not only for after death; happiness is for now and forever.

Another anthropological trait is compassion and kindness of human kind, man is naturally tender and charitable, fundamentally good, virtue corresponds to the nature of human being: *"Whence it is evident, that virtue is according to our nature; that we all, of ourselves, know our duties; and that it is not possible for us ever to find refuge in ignorance."* (Homely 23, 6). According to Chrysostom, ignorance cannot be an excuse because man is a reasonable being and he has an inner capacity of understanding as well as the right judgment of things. Here we find the role of the "*nous*": *"For God, gave us understanding, that we might chase away all ignorance, and have the right judgment of things, and that using this as a kind of weapon and light against all that is grievous or hurtful, we might remain in safety."* (Homely 20, 3).

Human being faces problems when the mind, which plays the role of a general, of a physician, is neglected *"for the sake of things superfluous and useless"*. In this approach we can already see the central role played by the *nous*, this cognitive capacity that any human being has in understanding and discerning, and finally in remaining safety.

To conclude on this anthropological anchorage, Chrysostom gives to the Pater Familias a solid reference system and an instrument, a kind of anthropological sextant, which helps the human being to navigate in his life, to find the destination and the way to get to the destination, in a word he gives to Pater familias a methodology for spiritual growth.

3.2 A First Step: Get Lucidity: New Vision

First step in this mindfulness program consists in becoming lucid—and the main important way to do it is to learn how to discern thoughts, feelings and situations. Chrysostom teaches how to get lucid and the capacity of discernment through an anthropological argumentation like hereafter:

But if thou art perplexed yet and dizzy at hearing this, I will ask thee nothing difficult nor involved, but a simple and plain question. Hast thou become some time bad? And hast thou become some time also good? What I mean, is like this. Didst thou prevail sometime over passion, and wast thou taken again by passion? (. . .) Whence then are all these things? Tell me, whence? (. . .). (Homely 59, 3).

To resume the teaching of Chrysostom, we can say that evil it is not natural, it is a “name”, evil appears outside the circle of human nature, and this is shown thanks to a classical criteria: changeable and unchangeable things. Thus, Chrysostom give to Pater Familias an instrument of analysis able to classify situations and things, they learn to see the reality with new eyes, to understand actions in a new perspective, in a word, they learn to be rational.

In the economic literature there is an important debate on the rationality versus irrationality, or bounded rationality of the human being. The controversy between neoclassical approach and the behavioral one is about criteria to be considered when dealing with the category of rationality. For the neoclassical approach, having well-ordered and stable preferences is a guarantee of rationality, while the behavioral approach defends the idea that cognitive biases prevent men to be rational and lead to non-rational, bounded-rational or quasi-rational decisions. In other words, man cannot decided on his own interest, sometimes he takes decisions which do not maximize his own benefit. Chrysostom is already aware of the impact of these cognitives biases and gives to the managers of the Late Antiquity an anthropological system of references able to limit these effects.

To conclude on lucidity, the vision of man as defended by Chrysostom reveals an ontological anchorage of cognitive abilities, a positive image of human nature and its capacity to deal with evil, evil being understood as everything which might negatively affect the human being and his accomplishment.

3.3 A Second Step: Get Discernment by Identifying Virtues and Passions in Management

A second step, starting from this anthropological scheme, involves defining virtues and passions, and this approach goes out from a moralistic perspective. Chrysostom's purpose is not to deal with norms and rules connected to the notion of moral and immoral, nor with the dialectics of guilty or innocent. What he purposes is a spiritual growth of Pater Familias through a healing process.

An etymological analysis of the words "virtue" and "passion" will illuminate the chrysostomian approach. The root of the word "*passion*" comes from the Greek "*pathos*"⁵ translated by *passion, emotion, anything that befalls one*. The word underlines the passive state of the person, it is an emotion or a state which dominates the human being exactly as a sickness. Thus, it is possible to analyze this matter from a medical perspective; and no longer talk about moral and immoral, but about healthy and sick. The same etymological analysis of the word "virtue", "*arête*" (Greek),⁶ "*virtus*" (Latin) allows us to see that virtue means *excellence, manhood, prowess, excellence of character of man*.

The original contribution of Chrysostom in this field lies in the fact that he emphasizes the fight against *passions*. In the traditional Western Christian writings the word "vices" is used instead that of *pathologies-passions*. However, the word "vices" has a strong moralistic meaning and does not correctly reflect the teaching of Chrysostom which is more a therapeutic approach rather than a juridical or a moralistic one. That's why we use the words *pathologies* and *passions* in italics in order to avoid any confusion with the actual meaning of the word *passions*, and abandon the word *vices*.

The "*nous*" will help again to heal from *pathologies*, by distinguishing the thoughts and the *passions* in the human mind:

For just as when the eyes are blinded, most of the energy of the other members is gone, their light being quenched; so also when the mind is depraved, thy life will be filled with countless evils. (...) For as he that destroys the fountain, dries up also the river, so he who hath quenched the understanding hath confounded all his doings in this life. Homélie 20, 3

The "*nous*" helps to go out of any confusion and analyses the way *pathologies* evolve as well as their impact on the entire life of Pater Familias. In discerning among *pathologies*, Chrysostom makes the difference between *natural* and *non-natural* ones. This is a classical philosophical distinction, and Chrysostom uses this methodology already known by the managers of the Antiquity, but he uses it into a Christian context.

⁵An intermediate Greek-English lexicon, 7th Ed., Lidell and Scott's, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 583–584.

⁶An intermediate Greek-English lexicon, 7th Ed., Lidell and Scott's, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 115.

“For wherefore dost thou never find fault with thy servant, because he is not of a beautiful countenance, that he is not of fine stature in his body, that he is not able to fly? Because these things are natural. So then from blame against his nature he is acquitted, and no man gain says it. When therefore thou blamest, thou showest that the fault is not of nature but of his choice. For if in those things, which we do not blame, we bear witness that the whole is of nature, it is evident that where we reprove, we declare that the offense is of the choice.

Do not then bring forward, I beseech thee, perverse reasoning, neither sophistries nor webs slighter than the spider’s, but answer me this again: Did God make all men? It is surely plain to every man. How then are not all equal in respect of virtue and vice? Whence are the good, and gentle, and meek? Whence are the worthless and evil? For if these things do not require any purpose, but are of nature, how are the one this, the others that? For if by nature all were bad, it were not possible for anyone to be good, but if good by nature, then no one bad. (...) But if we should say that by nature the one are good, the other bad, which would not be reasonable (as we have shown), these things must be unchangeable, for the things of nature are unchangeable. (...) For the things of nature are neither changed, nor do they need diligence for their acquisition. (...) But if after all this thou wouldest still inquire, whence are evils? I would say, from remissness, from idleness, from keeping company with the bad, from contempt of virtue; hence are both the evils themselves, and the fact that some inquire, whence are the evils. Since of them surely who do right no one enquires about these things, of them that are purposed to live equitably and temperately; but they, who dare to commit wicked acts, and wish to devise some foolish comfort, field to themselves by these discussions, do weave spiders’ webs” Homily on Matthew 59, 2–3.

This vision of man reveals an ontological anchorage of the practice of virtues. Observing virtues does not mean observing an external repressive code imposed by living in community. Social life is the area where virtue manifests itself as a characteristic of human nature. But if virtue means living according to one’s nature, how could we explain vices and finally evil? Chrysostom answers through another characteristic of mankind: man is free, endowed with reason and will. He is able to discern and consequently he has to fight weakness, which is likely to turn into *passions*, most commonly known as vices. Vice is not an ontological reality. It is not strong enough to render man powerless. Chrysostom considers man noble, smart. Making good use of his faculties gives him equilibrium, security, inner consistency, the latest being a guarantee for true happiness. Man has a double foundation: one visible-the body and the other one invisible-the soul. Consequently, he is likely to enjoy visible and invisible things simultaneously. Chrysostom considers this enjoyment as the key to happiness. The end of all his homilies reveals it.

3.3.1 Example of Natural Passion: Anger

One could think that anger has no much in common with business, however anger is important because it is the first enemy of the mindfulness and it is much more present in daily life than many other passions. Thus, trying to become mindful without being able to understand how anger is functioning is senseless. Let’s see how Chrysostom describes anger: “*For nothing is more grievous than wrath and fierce anger. This renders men both puffed up and servile, by the former making them ridiculous, by the other hateful; and bringing in opposite vices, pride and flattery, at the same time. But if we will cut off the greediness of this passion, we*

shall be both lowly with exactness, and exalted with safety. For in our bodies too all distempers arise from excess; and when the elements thereof leave their proper limits, and go on beyond moderation, then all these countless diseases are generated, and grievous kinds of death. Somewhat of the same kind one may see take place with respect to the soul likewise.” (Homely 10, 7). *“For beginning from those passions, which most belong to our whole race, anger, I mean, and desire (for it is these chiefly that bear absolute sway within us, and are more natural than the rest); . . . “And how,” one may say, “is it possible to be free from desire?” I answer, first, if we were willing, even this might be deadened, and remain inactive.”* Homely 17, 2.

First of all, following the methodology explained in the first step, Chrysostom identifies if anger is natural or non-natural to human being. He concludes that anger is a natural *passion*. We observe that a passion such as anger is an opened door to other passions—pride and flattery. This is the main characteristic of passions—a passion engenders others passions—it never comes alone. That’s way identifying *passions* and their way to act is a very difficult task but absolutely necessary in reaching *hesychia*. Another characteristic of passions is that they appear from excess, from crossing over certain limits.⁷

3.3.2 Example of a Non-natural Passion: Greed

Greed is an excessive desire of richness. This is not a natural passion but it is the strongest, more dangerous than a natural passion. However, exactly like a natural passion, greed engenders others passions. Greed is linked to vain glory, social status and identity, the economic behavior depends not on economic reasons but on social needs without enjoying life and experiencing any pleasure. Chrysostom helps the Pater Familias to understand their relationship with the material world, he does not criticize the material wealth in itself but its impact on the human nature: *“For nothing so trains men to be fond of riches, as the fondness for glory. This, for instance, is why men devise those herds of slaves, and that swarm of eunuchs, and their horses with trappings of gold, and their silver tables, and all the rest of it, yet more ridiculous; not to satisfy any wants, nor to enjoy any pleasure, but that they may make a show before the multitude.”* (Homily 20, 2).

Chrysostom do not criticize money or wealth itself, at the contrary, he sees a lot ways how to use wealth and money fruitfully from an economic and a spiritual point of view, it is the inner relationship that man has with money and wealth which counts, and he teaches how to be free from money whatever one is rich or poor.

What do we observe? Passions have an anthropological impact—nobleness and liberty are influenced by passions and human nature itself is affected. Passion brings man to a state of decadence, making him a slave, surrounding him with

⁷We find the same idea in the treatise “The creation of man” by Saint Gregory of Nyssa (379, Capadocia), where he says that evil comes from extremes, from overpassing the limits of moderation which becomes a territory favourable to evil. That means evil doesn’t really exist, evil appears in the absence of good, evil doesn’t have a real substance.

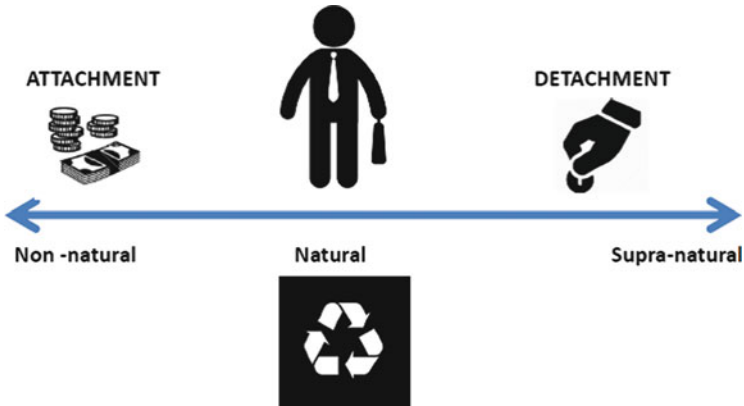


Fig. 2 Discernment by identifying virtues and passions in management

unhappiness. Is passion a fatality that man cannot change? If the problem of greed comes from a desire, the desire of richness, perhaps it would be better to look closer and analyses this desire. The conclusion of Chrysostom is a very fine one and modern at the same time. Curiously, when Robert C. Solomon talks about “abstract” greed,⁸ he defends the same idea. This desire of wealth is linked to vain glory is not a real desire; the real desire comes from a personal need—social recognition.

How is the Pater Familias presented in this homilies in regard to his relationship to wealth and money? Between two poles: either he becomes a beast, falling down below his human nature if gripped by wealth, either he becomes an angel if detached from material goods, which he shares with the poor.

We can describe Chrysostom’s analysis thanks to the following model, where man moves between a non-natural and a supra-natural poles function of the degree of the attachment or detachment to material world. The natural order corresponds to a material world which is dynamic, things circulate between people, and supra-natural is when man is detached from the material world, but this does not equal to non-possession. One can possess and be detached, while one who do not possess may be attached (Fig. 2).

The portrait of the rich displays the characteristics mentioned above: nobility, liberty, charity, kindness.

Chrysostom do not criticize the desire which often urge man to want wealth. On the contrary, he considers them completely justified. Who does not want to be appreciated by people, who does not want to be respected by his circle of acquaintances, who does not want nobility, who does not want freedom, who does not look for happiness? It is humanly normal to wish all these things and business life, in our case that of Pater Familias, makes part of this happiness.

⁸Solomon, R. C. , *Virtue ethics*.

I would like to make an observation—usually the literature of morals in economics concerns the ethic of the managerial process and not the happiness of the managers. Indeed, managers have to be moral, to conceive or to follow a moral or an ethical code, but Chrysostom was interested first of all in the happiness of the Pater Familias and he analyzes business in this perspective—the main criterion is the spiritual growth and the well-being of the Pater Familias. Chrysostom is not a judge of the Pater Familias, he does not ask them to become moral but happy, and happiness—as we have seen—depends on a life in conformity with the human nature, which is a good one. So, it is no longer necessary to imagine a code, an exterior one. The key to the problem of morality in management is an inner one to be found in the heart of managers.

As we remarked, the vocabulary used by Chrysostom is a medical one; we can never find the words “law, legal” in his writings. What law can oblige people to be happy? Chrysostom compares himself to a doctor, to a mother and often addresses himself the same remarks that he addresses to Pater Familias when he talks about the power of passions and how to fight against them—a great modesty from the part of a man who was one of the most important personages in the Roman Empire at that time. The Pater Familias were millionaires, they were very wealthy and busy people. However, they found time to listen to Chrysostom sometimes even 2 h and they applauded him in the end.

The analysis of *passions* shows where it comes from the biases in the decision making process. In the literature of the ethical decision making some of these biases were already mentioned, mainly the first stage of any ethical decision making process which is moral intensity (Hayibor and Wasieleski 2009; Kahneman 1982; Jones 1991). Indeed, in this stage which is determinant for the decision making process the biases intervene and modify the cues and the ethical arousal by diluting or increasing the impact of some factors. The most known heuristic bias is the availability heuristics and by its actions it prevent a rational decision making. The agent will prefer information already known and by using the shorter way to decide without taking the time to inquire and to collect new information about the context and the issues—the agent “knows” how to decide and do so. Another very common heuristic bias is the cognitive dissonance, when the agent will not take into consideration information that contradicts his original opinion on the matter to decide on. This is to say, any information that does not support the opinion of the agent is neglected and refused. These biases considerable change the decision making process, mainly its moral intensity, in the case of an ethical decision making process. An agent practicing the three steps mindfulness program of Chrysostom will be aware of these biases and will avoid them. The process of identifying thoughts and their way to influence a person is able to empower the managers with the ability to discern and to avoid biases in any decision making process.

3.4 A Third Step: Get Wisdom by Practice and Exercises: The Nepsis Manager

A third step is meant to use the results of the first and of the second step. The first being based on an anthropological enquiry and the latter on identifying virtues and passions. Therefore this third step has in view conceiving tactics and strategies able to diminish the effects of the *passions* and increase the impact of the *virtues*. This is now possible through a whole process of an inner spiritual awakening as a consequence of the first and of the second steps. The Pater Familias, the manager of the Antiquity is now a *nepsis manager*, a vigilant, lucid and wise manager able to discern thoughts and feelings, to identify virtues and pathologies. Let's have a concrete idea about the tactics and strategies that Chrysostom teaches to the *nepsis managers*.

Now, though I would fain say nothing to disgust you, yet I beseech again and entreat you imitate at least the little children's diligence in these matters. For so they first learn the form of the letters, after that they practice themselves in distinguishing them put out of shape, and then at last in their reading they proceed orderly by means of them. Just so let us also do; let us divide virtue, and learn first not to swear, nor to forswear ourselves, nor to speak evil; then proceeding to another row, not to envy, not to lust, not to be gluttonous, not to be drunken, not fierce, not slothful, so that from these we may pass on again to the things of the Spirit, and practice continence, and neglect of the belly, temperance, righteousness, to be above glory, and gentle and contrite in mind; and let us join these one with another, and write them upon our soul. Homily 11, 9.

So, mindfulness starts by basics exercises with the objective of cleaning the mind and body, meditation has no sense as soon as human being is not prepared for, and this is done through a behavioral approach. Chrysostom insists on the practice of these steps, starting by purifying the *logos*, by giving to the *word* the essential role it plays in human happiness. The "*nous*" is now ready to lead the Pater Familias to the practice of disciplining the *psyche* and the *body*. The *psyche* is going to get rid of passions like envy, anger and laziness and the *body* will be free from physical excess.

Is man alone in this process? Not at all, his family, his friends, his employees are part and contribute to the success of this transformation.

And all these let us practice at home, with our own friends, with our wife, with our children. And, for the present, let us begin with the things that come first, and are easier; as for instance, with not swearing; and let us practice this one letter continually at home (. . .) Let thy home be a sort of lists, a place of exercise for virtue, that having trained thyself well there, thou mayest with entire skill encounter all abroad. Homily 11, 10.

Chrysostom advices to start this process at home, as it is easier to change his behavior in front of people who are the most closed to us and most likely to support us and also most likely to benefit from these changes. Chrysostom advices to Pater Familias to ask to their family members and to servants and friends to monitor them and to correct them every time the exercises are not respected. There is a double

monitoring, from family and friends and of course self-monitoring. The Pater Familias has two types of tactics which are complementary: self-monitoring and family-monitoring.

Self-monitoring:

And that our exercise may be easier, let us further enact a penalty for ourselves, upon our transgressing any of our purposes. And let the very penalty again be such as brings with it not loss, but reward,—such as procures some very great gain. (. . .). For in this way will much profit come unto us from every quarter; we shall both live the sweet life of virtue here, and we shall attain unto the good things to come and be perpetually friends of God. Homily 11, 10.

The objective of self-monitoring is not to punish, to generate the feeling of guilt, but to keep the attention and the motivation at their highest levels, and this is also obvious from the following quotation:

Family-monitoring:

But in order that the same may not happen again,—that ye may not, having here admired what is said, go your way, and cast aside at random, wherever it may chance, the tablet of your mind, and so allow the devil to blot out these things;—let each one, on returning home, call his own wife, and tell her these things, and take her to help him; and from this day let him enter into that noble school of exercise, using for oil the supply of the Spirit. And though thou fall once, twice, many times in thy training, despair not, but stand again, and wrestle; and do not give up until thou hast bound on thee the glorious crown of triumph over the devil, and hast for the time to come stored up the riches of virtue in an inviolable treasure-house.

For if thou shouldest establish thyself in the habits of this noble self-restraint, then, not even when remiss, wilt thou be able to transgress any of the commandments, habit imitating the solidity of nature. Homily 11, 10.

The process of self-improvement, of self-righteousness implies a cooperation of the Pater Familias and of his family, friends and employees.

But if thou shouldest reply, “Habit has a wonderful power to beguile even those who are very much in earnest:” this I likewise acknowledge; however, there is another thing which I say with it; that as it is powerful to beguile, so also is it easy to be corrected. For if thou wilt set over thyself at home many to watch thee, such as thy servant, thy wife, thy friend, thou wilt easily break off from the bad habits, being hard pressed and closely restrained by all. If thou succeed in doing this for **ten days only**, thou wilt after that no longer need any further time, but all will be secured to thee, rooted anew in the firmness of the most excellent habit. When therefore thou art beginning to correct this, though thou shouldest transgress thy law a first, a second, a third, a twentieth time, do not despair, but rise up again, and resume the same diligence, and thou wilt surely prevail. Homily 11, 10.

We observe that the failure is not important; there are no guilty feelings during this process. The condition for this process to be successful resides in being perseverant, and in order to do this, the Pater Familias takes advantages on his own capabilities and on his environment (Fig. 3).

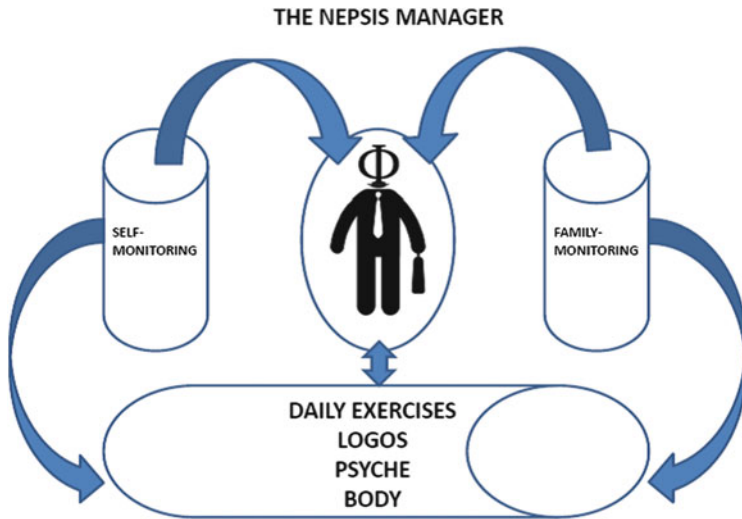


Fig. 3 Get wisdom by practice and exercises. The Nepsis Maager

The result of such a process is that good habits become a second nature, and correct the bad habits. In this sense, the Chrysostom’s works, perfectly resuming the hesychaste tradition of Early Christian tradition, are the precursors of the last scientific studies in the field of the neurosciences and of the cognitive-behavioral methods.

Mindfulness is not an objective itself, but a mean of accomplishment here and now and forever; and this is an endless process and implies that human being become ascetic first of all with his own mind. Chrysostom approach is positive and optimist, he trusts human being and his capacity to deal with VUCA world challenges.

4 Conclusions

If Chrysostom were preaching today on VUCA world challenges he would start like this: *“Do not tell me about volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, these are names and illusions for those who practice hesychia and nepsis, the veils fall down in front of their lucidity. For such a man’s view the understanding is not bounded by the nets of complexity and ambiguity, and he discovers the real faces of volatility and uncertainty. The nepsis-manager, when facing difficulties and problems engendered by a VUCA world, he methodically analyses and discerns about issues and finds the appropriate solutions. So, do not excuse yourself in ignorance, but stop complaining and start today to learn how to become a nepsis-manager.”*

To synthesize and conclude on the teaching of Chrysostom and his propositions to improve the actual research on mindfulness at theoretical and practical level, we underline three innovative tools:

- (1) The pre-mindful preparation with an anthropological anchorage,—this perspective give new theoretical paths and mark from a practical point of view the pre-condition of a successful mindfulness practice.
- (2) The role played by the “nous”—in becoming lucid. There are three words central to this step: the “nous, “dianoia” and “criterion”—all show that before practicing mindfulness one has to use these inner cognitive instruments, mankind has all these capabilities, he has to use them adequately.
- (3) To set up the inventory of virtues and passions, a sinequanon condition to become mindful and mainly to remain mindful. In this mindfulness has not only short term benefits but contributes to an inner improvement stable in time, as a guarantee to the impregnable happiness, the real finality of any mindfulness process.

As we have seen, for Chrysostom what is really important in this integrative program is the fight against *passions* and the good will. Excellence is not to be excellent but to perform the present situation little by little every day—this is perfection. We have a dynamic vision of excellence which doesn't discourage but encourages tending to excellence, to desire it.

“*From all virtues, the biggest one is the ability to discern*”⁹ says an apothegm.¹⁰ Chrysostom, like all Fathers of the Church and Desert Fathers, had inherited this wisdom. It is not only an intellectual heritage, but mainly a spiritual one learnt through own experience. It is what Chrysostom tried to transmit to Pater Familias, this is the quintessence of his integrative mindfulness program.

Reflective Questions

1. What is the anthropological anchorage which has to precede any mindfulness process?
2. What are the names of the three steps of the integrative mindfulness program and which are there corresponding objectives?
3. What is a virtue and what is passion?
4. What are the impacts of passions on human being?
5. What is the role of daily exercises?
6. What is a nepsis-manager?
7. What is hesychia?

⁹*Les Apophtegmes des Pères*, Editions du cerf, Paris, 2005, p. 207, no. 25.

¹⁰Apophtegmes means a sentence resuming an understanding of the Fathers of the Desert.

References

- Baer, R. A. (2003). Mindfulness training as a clinical intervention: A conceptual and empirical review. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 10*, 125–143.
- Baer, R. A., Smith, G. T., Hopkins, J., Krietemeyer, J., & Toney, L. (2006). Using self-report assessment methods to explore facets of mindfulness. *Assessment, 13*(1), 27–45.
- Bishop, S. R., Lau, M., Shapiro, S., Carlson, L., Anderson, N. D., Carmody, J., Segal, Z. V., Abbey, S., Speca, M., Velting, D., & Devins, G. (2004). Mindfulness: A proposed operational definition. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 11*, 230–241. doi:10.1093/clipsy.bph077.
- Brown, P. (2012). *Through the eye of a needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ.
- 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), 822–848.
- Chiesa, A., & Serretti, A. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for stress management in healthy people: A review and meta-analysis. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, 15*(5), 593–600.
- Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., Schumacher, J., Rosenkranz, M., Muller, D., Santorelli, S. F., & Urbanowski, F. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine, 65*(4), 564–570.
- Grossman, P., Niemann, L., Schmidt, S., & Walach, H. (2004). Mindfulness-based stress reduction and health benefits. A meta-analysis. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 57*(1), 35–43.
- Hayibor, S., & Wasieleski, D. M. (2009). Effects of the use of the availability heuristic on ethical decision-making in organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics, 84*, 151–165.
- Hofmann, S. G., Sawyer, A. T., Witt, A. A., & Oh, D. (2010). The effect of mindfulness-based therapy on anxiety and depression: A meta-analytic review. *NIH Public Access, 78*(2), 169–183.
- Jones, T. M. (1991). Ethical decision making by individuals in organizations: An issue-contingent model. *Academy of Management Review, 16*(2), 366–395.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context: Past, present, and future. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 10*(2), 144–156.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2009). Mindfulness, 1–4. *Management in Healthy People: A Review and Meta-Analysis, 15*(5), 593–600.
- Kahneman, D. (1982). *Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Lawlor, M. S. (2010). The effects of a mindfulness-based education program on pre- and early adolescents' well-being and social and emotional competence. *Mindfulness, 1*(3), 137–151.
- Teasdale, J. D., Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G., Ridgeway, V. A., Soulsby, J. M., & Lau, M. A. (2000). Prevention of relapse/recurrence in major depression by mindfulness-based cognitive therapy. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*(4), 615–623.

Nicoleta Acatrinei is an economist and started her career as an executive in banking. She received her Ph.D. from Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP), Switzerland. Drawing on her Ph.D. dissertation (published in 2016 in Geneva by Globethics Foundation), she conceived the Swiss Knife Management Tools leading to a sustainable, cost effective, ethical and human friendly management for public and private organizations. She is now a postdoctoral research associate at Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative and Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University. She is working on The Integration Profile, a psychometric scale proposed by Dr. David W. Miller capturing religious/spiritual manifestations at work, which is used as a tool able to improve management strategies in regard to the religious/spiritual needs and expectations of employees as well as a support for inner religious/spiritual growth at work.

Making Sense of Organizational Change in Times of Dynamic Complexity: Change Managerialism and Reflexivity

Alain Guiette and Koen Vandenbempt

1 Introduction

The organizational change literature reveals a wealth of information on the events that trigger sense-making, on the factors that influence the sense-making process, and on the outcome of sense-making (Sandberg and Tsoukas 2015), emphasizing the cognitive, social, and discursive micro-processes of sense-making to deal with the VUCA world. Although this research broadly acknowledges that sense-making does not unfold in a vacuum, nor that is sense-making context-free (Taylor and Van Every 1999; Weber and Glynn 2006; Weick et al. 2005), the dynamics through which dominant ‘macro-level discourses’ (Brown et al. 2014) or ‘social logics’ (Alvesson and Willmott 2012; Marcuse 1968; Tsoukas 1994) shape sense-making processes remains under researched. Sense-making processes, however, seem to be less guided by individual and organizational actions, and more influenced by unquestioned assumptions and commonly held beliefs about reality ‘out there’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008), assumptions and presuppositions that often unconsciously influence how agents make sense and assign meaning to organizational situations. These assumptions that are encapsulated in a social macro-level discourse of ‘change managerialism’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2011) co-create sense-making micro-processes and restrict the agency of individual sense-makers. This dynamic remains largely under-researched since the sense-making literature focuses strongly on sense-makers’ agency and tends to undervalue the guiding effect dominant logics and macro-level discourses.

A. Guiette (✉)

Department of Management, Universiteit Antwerpen, Prinsstraat 13, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium
e-mail: alain.guiette@uantwerpen.be

K. Vandenbempt

Department of Management, Universiteit Antwerpen, Prinsstraat 13, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium
Antwerp Management School, Sint-Jacobsmarkt 13, 2000 Antwerp, Belgium
e-mail: koen.vandenbempt@uantwerpen.be

This chapter critically analyzes how a managerialistic logic towards change guides the micro-processes of sense-making in a VUCA world and how this dominant logic suppresses reflexive capabilities. We analyze, based on empirical material from a case study conducted at a professional service firm, how change managerialism—largely unintentionally—affects the sense-making processes of organizational actors that are supposed to bring the planned change alive.

2 The Dominant Logic of Change Managerialism

Research on sense-making in organizations displays a predominant cognitive and social orientation, putting a premium on micro-level constructs in order to describe and analyze sense-making processes, including discursive practices, language, identity, emotions, expectations, etc.—see Maitlis and Christianson (2014) and Sandberg and Tsoukas (2015) for a comprehensive overview. What remains unexplored, nevertheless, is the explication of how a ‘dominant logic’ (Bettis and Prahalad 1995; Prahalad and Bettis 1986, 2000; Spender 1989) guides or constrains sense-making of organizational members, often in subtle and concealed ways. Indeed, these frames of reference at macro, meso and micro level (Cornelissen and Werner 2014) enable people to interpret organizational reality and make sense of the VUCA environment, providing guidelines as how to enact meaning (Greenwood et al. 2011; Lawrence et al. 2013). It is this exploration of the “constitutive effects of macro-level discourse on sense-making” (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 98) that remains unexplored and contains potential for better understanding how micro-processes of sense-making are enacted that lead to unintended consequences of suppressing reflexivity in a VUCA context. Therefore we draw in particular upon ideas of ‘managerialism’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2011; Clegg 2014; Parker 2009) in order to critically analyze micro-processes of sense-making and to shed light on hidden dynamics induced by certain managerial logics.

Managerialism is based upon a “view of managers as a distinct group (as opposed to non-managers) of (rational) actors providing and applying the necessary business oriented means for the good of organizations” (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2011, p. 349), or phrased differently: “Managerialism refers to a strong emphasis on managers being in charge, possessing a superior overview, knowledge and authority.” (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008, p. 151). In a context of organizational change, managerialism emphasizes the underlying belief that managers have to manage change, preferably in a planned and rational way adopting formulaic prescriptions that reflect a specific version of a ‘best practice’ n-step model. Examples include planned change theories such as Lewin’s three-stage model of change (Lewin 1947), punctuated equilibrium models of change (Kanter et al. 1992; Van de Ven and Poole 1995), and other rational ‘n-step models’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008; Collins 1998) where change processes are reduced to rationalized ‘milestones’ controlled by managerialistic framings, neglecting the high degree of equivocality and subsequently triggered interpretation and sense-making processes.

In this chapter we focus more specifically on managerialism in a context of realizing organizational change—which we coin ‘*change managerialism*’. We

particularly zoom in on the interdependence between ontological assumptions commonly held in managerialism on the one hand, and their discursive and representational considerations on the other hand. From an ontological perspective, managerialism is reflected in deeply held beliefs that social systems are governed by instrumental or functional rationality emphasizing the logic of the system rather than the lifeworld, whereby the former colonizes the latter (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009; Habermas 1984). The underlying assumption is that managerial practices are objective, impartial, scientific, and technically superior (Alvesson and Willmott 2012), eventually resulting in one-dimensionality and un-reflexive consumerism (Horkheimer and Adorno 1947/1972; Marcuse 1968; Ritzer 1998) by processes of normalization of power relations. One-dimensionality is particularly relevant in this context as it emphasizes “how a dominant social logic effectively produces people that are mesmerized and subordinated to its mode of operating” (Alvesson and Willmott 2012, p. 66). Managerialism thus presupposes that complex, equivocal and fuzzy phenomena can be reduced to “(o)verly dominant static categories that obscure a logic of observational ordering based on the representationalist principles of division, location, isolation, classification and the elevation of self-identity.” (Chia 1999, p. 210). In other words: order, linearity, homogeneity, permanence, stability, predictability, discreteness are granted primacy. The enactment of these un-reflexive representations of underlying ontological beliefs clearly affect how organizations subsequently make sense of change and deal with the VUCA context.

3 Case Illustration: ServiceCo

3.1 Research Design

This case adopts a qualitative interpretative research design (Gephart 2004; Prasad 2002; Prasad and Prasad 2002; Sandberg 2005) aimed at generating a deeper understanding of how specific organizational phenomena are constructed by actors involved. Interpretive research designs are particularly relevant for exploring meaning construction and sense-making processes in organizational (social) contexts (Klag and Langley 2012; Langley and Abdallah 2011). The phenomenon of investigation entails a single case study of the implementation of a major organizational change process in a professional service firm, which we will call ServiceCo. As such, the research design is grounded in process philosophy (Langley et al. 2013; Rescher 1996; Tsoukas and Chia 2002) whereby the understanding of how meaning is constructed and sense-making influenced is critical: the focus is on the dynamic becoming and enactment of meaning rather than on the specific content of the enactments.

We adopted a predominant abductive research design (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009; Klag and Langley 2012; Shepherd and Sutcliffe 2011; Van de Ven 2007) allowing a close interdependency and mutual enrichment of empirical material and theoretical insights which gradually shaped our interpretative repertoire. The research design adopted was furthermore heavily inspired by a reflexive research methodology (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009) granting priority to problematizing

surface meaning and aiming at a critical hermeneutic understanding (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009; Palmer 1969; Prasad and Mir 2002) of empirical material based on an interpretative repertoire that gradually evolved from sense-making literatures (Holt and Cornelissen 2013; Weick 1979, 1995; Weick et al. 2005) to include critical management studies (Alvesson et al. 2009; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009; Alvesson and Willmott 2012) and eventually institutional logics (Greenwood et al. 2014; Thornton et al. 2012) literatures.

Empirical material consists of 32 open-ended and semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted between December 2012 and September 2013, as well as selected documents (including PowerPoint presentations to the Board and to the larger organization, as well as the ‘poster’ synthesizing the change process) and a corporate video of the ‘official’ kick-off meeting of the new division. Data analysis followed a predominantly abductive logic (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009; Dubois and Gadde 2014; Van de Ven 2007) during which ‘systematic combining’ is used to go systematically “back and forth between framework, data sources and analysis” (Dubois and Gadde 2002, p. 556). The abductive logic of this research implies that the research question and interpretive repertoires used during data analysis evolved in an effort to generate plausible and valid explanations and explorations of the empirical material.

3.2 Empirical Context

The case study presented analyses a major organizational change at professional service firm ServiceCo. ServiceCo is an international organization listed on the stock exchange, active in the broad domain of Human Resources services to a variety of organizations. The organization, consisting of several divisions to service different market segments, faced increased ‘market pressure’ since the financial crisis of 2008–2009. Inspired by decreasing margins of their core activities, the Board of ServiceCo hired external consultants for advice on how to secure their competitive advantage moving forward. Based on these outcomes as well as overall market trends in the professional services industry, ServiceCo’s Board announced a new organizational structure along with the creation of a new division that would regroup a series of existing departments, under the “Expert” label.

The case presented focuses on the strategic change associated with the creation of the Expert label. Following the Board announcement of the new intended structure and associated value propositions, a management team of three senior ServiceCo members and a COO for the new division have been appointed. This management team was mandated to craft a new strategy for the Expert division, stipulating how the newly assembled division can realize its imposed revenue objectives in terms of revenue increase and revenue composition driven by new ‘consulting’ services. The strategy formulation process was spearheaded by the management team and a program manager, employing a participative approach that involved all general managers of the merged departments that eventually had to create the Expert division. This crafting exercise, initiated immediately after the

initial Board announcement, culminated in a strategic plan for the Expert division about 1 year later. By then the new strategy kicked off, the new label was introduced to the broader organization, all ServiceCo employees—and specifically those that would be part of the Expert division—were formally informed on the content of the strategy, and the media was invited to celebrate the launch of the new division.

This merger of various international departments into one division being rebranded to “Expert” was aimed at introducing a series of Expert consulting services. The objective of introducing these consulting services consists of fostering a stronger partnership with ServiceCo’s customers, and providing more value-added end-to-end services addressing the customer’s organizational and strategic challenges. Expert consulting services are expected to reach 50% of total Expert revenues in 5 years’ time. In order to facilitate this strategic reorientation, the strategic plan prescribed gradual relocation of Expert staff to national headquarters adopting a “new way of working”; new administrative and support IT systems and processes; the adoption of new go-to-market models; increased performance expectations and competence levels for Expert employees; and not the least, the development of expertise and competence in providing consulting services.

4 Enacting Change Managerialism

This section analyzes how ServiceCo enacted a change managerialism through a dominant macro-level discourse of instrumental rationality on the one hand, and the rendering of this logic into grandiose discursive and rhetoric change utterances.

4.1 Instrumental Rationality

ServiceCo’s approach to managing change displays a number of characteristics that are clearly inspired by an ideology of ‘instrumental rationality’ (Alvesson and Willmott 2012) viewing change as a “grand technocratic project” (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008, p. 44), emphasizing categorization, uniformity and standardization under assumptions of a fixed reality and stability, as well as homogeneity resulting eventually to administration or ‘McDonaldization’ (Ritzer 1998) of the change process.

4.1.1 Categorization, Uniformity, and Standardization

Managing change at ServiceCo was characterized by a strong urge to categorize and standardize in an effort to create uniformity among the division, as well as uniformity in understanding and interpretation of the new strategy through tightly orchestrated PowerPoint presentations, roadshows, and kick-off meetings. The objective being to indoctrinate a uniform understanding of ‘the’ change process,

creating a temping ‘myopia’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008) through standardization, categorization, and uniformization. First, there was an outspoken desire by many individuals to have a ‘reference project’, a project that serves as example of what they are supposed to deliver to their clients and which they could replicate among their client base. This ‘reference project’ would need to be supported by other ‘best practices’ and standardized ‘methodologies’ that help to replicate work. The call for best practices resonates both in terms of internal organization “*We have to make sure that we communicate uniformly and exchange best practices*” (MT3) or in terms of change processes “*In terms of the change process, an external consultant helped us in making sure that we followed best practices in our approach, and that we did the classical steps of change*” (MT2). As to the reference project: “*We are working internally on a project—if it succeeds, this could be used as a reference case for our clients that would be terrific!*” (Expert13) or “*What we need to move forward is a reference project, then it will become clear what we need to do*” (Expert4) and methodology “*In terms of expertise I don’t expect major changes, what we need are tools and methodologies*” (Expert19).

Second, a major first step in the implementation process consisted of mapping the professional population in terms of competences and to categorize them in ‘functions’ and ‘levels’ in order to create a capability ‘matrix’. Once the competences were mapped and labelled, development paths were designed in order to have ‘experts’ ready for their first projects: “*We conducted a SWOT analysis, have divided our people into levels to see how much competence we have at each level*” (DM4) or “*We made an inventory of who is standing where in terms of competences*” (DM5) assuming more or less uniform categories of competent people that subsequently follow standardized courses to reach the next ‘level’.

The quest for standardization continues in operationalizing the strategic plan: the strategic plan has identified different targets groups for which a number of promises are made, promises that are translated to lead measures and then to back measures, in order to create a series of key performance indicators that serve to monitor performance and progress. The operationalization is represented smoothly and flawless, exceptions are not allowed. “*We have incorporated the same strategic objectives for all managers*” (MT1) “*And we also set ambitious targets for all our staff: they all need to have four development moments per year.*” (MT3).

4.1.2 Assumption of Fixed Reality/Stability

Expert’s MT adopted an approach to designing and managing change that reflected taken-for-granted assumptions of stability, imputing a certain fixed-ness on the world ‘out there’. There is an overall “*assumption that stability is the norm and that change occurs in successive states, as a result of managerially initiated and planned change programs*” (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008, p. 19).

The creation of the Expert division was the result of, on the one hand, the Board’s ‘homework’ based on a 5-year old consulting report recommending the

current strategic change; and on the other hand, on the monitoring of current market trends that affect professional service firms in their go-to-market strategies. Based on this input, a 5-year strategic plan was established that would ‘safeguard’ the organization from current trends, under the assumption that trends detected in the past are still fashionable today, and in the time horizon of 5 years during which the strategy will be rolled out. It is furthermore assumed that once Expert overhauls this lag compared with ‘the trends’, business-as-usual and stability will return. This will be achieved through training ‘futureproof consultants’ that will sell ‘futureproof’ services: “*We finally have a story to tell that is futureproof*” (MT3), or “*Our futureproof consultants are responsible to increase the quality and excellence of our customers’ business processes*” (Expert4). This reflects many change models’ implicit assumption of simplicity that are universally applicable to any organization (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008). On top, ServiceCo hired a change ‘guru’ in order to adopt a ‘best practice’ change process “*in order to anticipate what typically goes wrong during change*” (MT2).

4.1.3 Assumption of Homogeneity

The design of the change plan was furthermore based on outspoken assumptions of homogeneity that resulted in a lack of attention in taking historicity and idiosyncrasies of various units and contexts seriously. The rebranding into ‘Expert’ was detrimental to a number of department’s brand identity and associated reputation in specific market segments. Uniformity and consistency seemed to be more important than safeguarding peculiar competitive advantages associated to an idiosyncratic identity. As such, the rebranding effort aimed at creating a ‘one name fits all’ identity irrespective of identity and historicity of various constituting units. The heterogeneity of the various operating companies that were regrouped under the Expert label was in this respect underestimated. Whereas at MT-level there is a clear sense of unity and homogeneity designed in the strategic plan—“*As a division, we are all the same, and we want this strategy to work*” (MT4) and a desire for creating uniformity across the division (“*great minds think alike*”)—the different operating companies call in their uniqueness and idiosyncrasies in terms of culture, historicity and activities to somehow dissociate themselves from the ‘one-fits-all’ strategy to the extent that “*we were wondering whether this new strategy actually is a step forward; for us it represents a step backward as we are already thinking along these lines for quite some time, so what’s the point for us?*” (Expert16). As such, management’s desire of homogeneity clashed with the operating businesses’ elevated sense of atypicality. Assumptions of homogeneity surface also during the exercise of ‘mapping the current capabilities’ whereby internal and external staff are considered as two distinct, but internally homogeneous, groups: “*We work with 2 types of people: internal people that do sales and support, and external people that are located at the client site*” (MT1). The differences in terms of competences within the two buckets, however, seems larger than the aggregated differences between the buckets, at least in terms of readiness

for embarking the change journey. Hence, the endeavor of homogeneity colonizes the (not so subtle) heterogeneity on the ground.

4.1.4 McDonaldization

The launch of the Expert division was meticulously prepared by the management team: a change trajectory was outlined and supported by a program manager to keep track of deadlines and deliverables. The strategic plan consisted of a series of projects that represented the major change areas for implementation, each project was headed by a MT member and a general manager. The process followed a strong linear step-by-step logic whereby formulation and implementation are clearly segregated: implementation of ‘the plan’ could only start once it was completely formulated by the management team and interpreted univocally by the general managers of the division. There was an overall assumption of ‘linearization’ of the change process translating into a strict segregation of formulation and implementation, thereby neglecting the open-endedness, recursive, and incremental nature of managing change (Alvesson and Willmott 2012).

The objective was to crystallize the new strategy in a highly simplified and clear metaphor whereby any possible doubt or hesitance would be killed. The MT clearly reflected a strong urge to control both the process and the forthcoming interpretation of the messages to be communicated and adopted a strong top-down approach both in designing the change and dissemination process. Efforts were made to being fully in control of the process and eradicate any sense of doubt in the process. Cascading the plan according to formal hierarchy was therefore important, reflecting strong adherence to a *hierarchical structure based on titles*, although the MT was somehow forced to continue the cascade that was imposed by the Board, thereby lacking managerial discretion.

4.2 Grandiose Change Discourse

ServiceCo’s managerialistic approach towards change emanated also discursively from a grandiose change discourse adopted by the MT. The orchestrated change discourse consisted of various elements: a discourse emphasizing the elevated ‘consulting’, ‘expert’ and ‘professional’ status of the new services, a discursive amplification resulting in a change appearing much more important than the developments on the ground, a discourse aimed at repackaging the current status and hence leading to emptiness and superficiality, and a discursive reduction of complexity to superficial simplicity.

4.2.1 ‘Professional’ Discourse

Preparing the transition from more standardized HR services to more value added consulting services, the implementation process strongly emphasized a consulting—expert—professional discourse. This discourse employed during change

dissemination process was eagerly replicated by Expert staff and was as such granted the status of change in itself through a pre-fabricated ‘rebranding story’ that Expert staff was expected to use during client interaction: “*We have all received a rebranding story that we can tell to our clients so that we know what we have to tell our customers*” (Expert4). Expert staff that thus far were merely active in sales and cold calling activities considered themselves as consultants: “*We call ourselves also consultants*” (Expert11)—“*We are a team of future-proof consultants*” (Expert4) whereas the typical employee profile nor Expert’s organization and processes do reflect a typical consulting profile: “*attending training has always been an issue: people work from 9 to 5 and then they want to go home rather than attend a training*” (Expert8); “*I sit at the client’s offices from 9 to 5 and never have contact with ServiceCo, except for submitting my timesheet, and yes, they pay my salary*” (Expert9); “*Last year, ServiceCo organized an event on social media, however, people were not interested as it was not within working hours.*” (Expert7). As such, the grand ‘professional’ discourse was in rather sharp contrast with the expert’s displayed attitude, a trend that aligns with an inclination towards expert competence in a ‘knowledge-intensive society’ (Alvesson 2013).

Not only was Expert staff expected to become consultants, they need to be experts in their respective fields of expertise, whereby a major managerial concern consisted of “*being perceived as experts by the market*” (DM6), “*distinguishing us from competitors as real experts*” (MT4), and “*becoming a real expert*” (Expert18). The approach to transform the team of sales staff to expert consultants was however less ambitious and limited to an ‘Expedition 2020 Sales Training’ consisting of a 2-day consultative selling training session followed up by sales coaching sessions. As such, it was presumed that expert consultants are developed by providing a 2-day sales training to existing sales staff: “*We have to work on people’s expertise, that’s why we are giving this training to everyone*” (DM4), “*We are being trained to ask our customers what solutions they need to their most strategic problems*” (Expert2), and “*We received training in consultative selling and personality types, so that we know what questions to ask in order to discover the real problems of our clients*” (Expert4). The ‘professional’ was somehow ‘constructed’.

4.2.2 Discursive Amplification of Change

Discourse adopted by Expert MT during the announcement of the change and subsequent communications seemed to amplify the magnitude of what was really going to change, at least in the short to medium term. The magnitude of the upcoming change was amplified both in terms of timing and content. The temporal dimension related to referring to the change being the last rescue prior to corporate death, the last way out: “*if we continue with providing the services that we do now, we can turn off the light and our organization doesn’t exist anymore*” (Expert2), or referring to the boat and sailor metaphor: “*not only do we have to rebuild the boat, the boat is sinking, so we need to rebuild and shovel water, and fast*” (VP). The content dimension inflated the magnitude of change in terms of positioning the new

consulting services as something completely different: “*the consulting services that we’ll offer are totally different from our current services: you need a totally different skill set, different processes, different infrastructure, everything is different*” (MT3). Management advanced a rhetorical ‘presumed need for change’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2008) supported by discursive strategies to clearly construct the need for change as well as its urgency.

For Expert staff, nevertheless, it was not very clear what this big difference was, “*the difference is indeed vague, in theory you could make a difference, but in reality. . . it depends how you package it*” (Expert1) to the extent that its magnitude was put in a broader perspective: “*Maybe we expect that we will do something completely different, whereas this eventually may not be the case*” (Expert2). The buzz created upfront clearly created amplified expectations: “*I actually expected much more in terms of content, I missed a lot of content as to what is going to change, and it sounded like abracadabra*” (Expert3). As such, both in terms of felt time pressure and content, Expert’s change discourse radically opposed the—thus far—lived reality which remained more or less unchanged: the dominant stylized discourse and strategy presentations were incongruent with the lived reality among staff (Alvesson et al. 2009).

4.2.3 Repackaging of Emptiness

The grandiose change discourse was also embodied through adopting a rather empty vocabulary in describing the change, a vocabulary that was replicated throughout the division carrying only limited meaning. Change was characterized through “*competence thinking . . . integral projects . . . multidisciplinary teams . . . shifting from business units to competence centers*” (Expert4). When asked what the shift from business units to competence centers implied, the answer was: “*That is not clear to me, it remains vague. . . I think we will focus more on competences, on competence thinking and integral projects. . .*” (Expert4). The grandiose change discourse elaborated upon earlier was clearly replicated by Expert staff, unaware of the void in terminology and the lack of concrete content.

On the surface, Expert staff had a sense that they embarked on becoming ‘strategic’, addressing ‘strategic’ issues of ‘strategic importance’: “*Having experts, we can help our customers with their strategic problems, and we can start doing consultancy*” (DM4) even to becoming “*strategic partners*” (Expert6), “*trusted advisor*” (DM5) or creating “*strategic thought partnership*” (Expert14) with customers. The jargon used to label nearly everything as ‘strategic’ sounds more in line with managerial fads and fashions (Abrahamson 1996) than the outcome of a well-thought ‘strategy’.

Furthermore, in terms of providing ‘strategic’ services, the type of services alluded to seems to imply “*doing a (standardized) quick scan of a department to see what goes wrong*” (Expert2), “*doing an audit and then delivering a report*” (Expert8), or “*having the consultant sitting in our office rather than at the client*” (DM5). It seems unlikely that standardized quick scans supported by asking the

right questions enables the delivery of custom-made strategic solutions to organizations. It looks as if existing services have been re-packaged and re-labelled with a strategic ribbon and are been re-presented adopting strategic jargon, eventually referring to a highly similar type of HR-oriented and pretty standardized services.

4.2.4 Reduction of Complexity to Simplicity

The somewhat empty and superficial repackaging nevertheless implies a highly simplified representation of the intended organizational—‘strategic’—change, thereby circumventing the complex and equivocal messiness that is associated with change implementation. Expert’s MT was infatuated with an urge to simplify all change communications in order to keep everything as simple as possible: representing the change process in five simple slides, short elevator pitches, templates, factsheets and other highly simplified representations. As a result, Expert staff experienced the major strategic change in ‘reduced’ versions, emphasizing highly operational dimensions, including: the rebranding, new headquarters, new methodologies, the ‘change poster’, new distribution models, new email addresses, new promotional material, increased internal collaboration between business units, centralization of administrative processes in a ‘mid-office’, introduction of a new way of working, different usage of databases, project management tools, etc. In a similar vein, operationalizing the strategic consulting services emphasized highly operational characteristics rather than its strategic content, such as invoicing processes in terms of hours charged versus fixed fees, whether the project was executed at the client office or in Expert’s office, whether, overall length and number of staff assigned to a project, etc.

4.2.5 Crisis and Market Pressure Rhetoric

Another element of the grandiose change discourse adopted by Expert’s MT includes legitimizing the imposed change plan as a response to ‘the crisis’ and ‘the pressure’ from ‘the market’. Although change implementation was predominantly framed from a positive perspective, emphasizing the grand shift to strategic services, the fact that we live in difficult times, hit by financial crises and increasing market pressure and a shifting competitive landscape was more than once emphasized. Although the crisis is put forward the major culprit for declining business and revenues, what precise elements of ‘the crisis’ or ‘the market pressure’ are to blame for the decline, remains unclear. Whereas one could equally think that a lack of agility in detecting early signals and weak cues that pinpoint the increasing redundancy of standardized HR services as a possible reason for revenue decline, it was clearly ‘the crisis’ fueled by social networks: *“combined with the impact of social media and the knowledge of our customers, our business model is eroding”* (MT3), *“A major risk lies in social media: organizations can do the work themselves and they don’t need us anymore”* (Expert20). This reactive mode towards

evolving trends in ‘the market’ amplified the generated sense of urgency created by the change discourse adopted even further in an effort to avoid becoming redundant in times of crisis and increased competition.

5 Impact of Change Managerialism on Sense-Making Micro-Processes

In what follows we will discuss the consequences of change managerialism enactment on the sense-making micro-processes of Expert staff. Our point is that employee sense-making is shaped through a dynamic interplay of dominant macro-level discourse of change managerialism on the one hand, and a representation of this change managerialism through rhetoric strategies on the other hand. This interdependent play results in sense-making that is characterized by system colonization of the sense-maker’s lived reality, de-familiarization, discursive disconnection, and eventually suppression of reflexive capabilities.

5.1 Colonization of Lifeworld

The grand strategic discourse employed by Expert’s MT during the announcements of the division’s new strategy somehow contradicted the lifeworld or lived reality of staff. Instrumental rationality supplanted the staff’s practical concerns and questions resulting in a strategic discourse floating way above the lived reality of people that are supposed to realize the strategy. Daily practice concerns of employees were opposed to grandiose topics covered in ‘strategic projects. Employees’ lifeworld was colonized mainly by the use of container terminology that did not connect with the practices and activities of employees, by the overemphasis on tools, databases, and reporting requirements that do not align with the operational business where the real work gets done and somehow shifting focus during the change from people to tools. For example: “*we are being asked to use specific tools for reporting purposes, but the work we do cannot be reported using those tools and systems which are aimed at another type of work*” (Expert19) or “*the change basically means that we are mutating to a new database, beyond that I think that little is changing*” (Expert20), or “*you have to set out a very detailed plan of what you have to do to achieve the change, and then define very detailed steps for tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, and stick to it*” (VP). As such, efforts to indoctrinate the ‘new strategy’ overwrite lived reality and results in replicated emptiness. Expert’s Management Team hereby functions as a colonizing power that erodes the life worth of organizational members through decoupling knowledge from experience, insight, reasoning and reflexive judgment (Alvesson and Willmott 2012). In the words of Habermas we can argue that the managerialistic approach towards change, governed by instrumental reality, colonizes the lifeworld build on communicative reason, whereby the former supplants the latter (Alvesson

et al. 2009; Habermas 1984). Lifeworld's colonization implies that processes of interpretation and meaning enactment become reduced by the power of the rationalized discourse of the organization. The direct phenomenal experience of people tends to be substituted by the objectified logics that are orchestrated by organizations. These power relations thus shape, often unintentionally, the sense-making process of employees, and normalize lived experience in line with the predominant institutional logics. Through this colonization "change is increasingly driven by the attempt to gain control over ever-increasing swathes of people's lives and their subjectivities" (Alvesson et al. 2009, p. 256), which results in de-familiarization.

5.2 De-familiarization

Expert staff experienced the change implementation in a highly detached mode, as something happening out there, not really affecting their work, and being rather detached from their work-as-usual. This detachment was partly induced by the rationalized and technocratic approach to change and organizing in general. One example is the regrouping of all administrative staff of various business units in a 'mid-office', the consequence being that *"people are not involved anymore in what they do, they are now somewhere on an island disconnected from where the action and the business is going on. One could really question whether this even supports the business"* (DM6). Also, in formulating the strategic plan, the change projects identified are considered as something that comes on top of business as usual, something that needs to be pushed by a project administrator: *"All these project come on top of our own work, luckily we have a project administrator that really pushes us through the process, he is really pushing us to do all of this"* (MT4). As such, change developed into something 'out there' unfolding on top of work-as-usual. In cascading a uniform change story throughout the organization, and indoctrinating Expert staff with 'the story', employees are deprived from enacting their won interpretations linked to change implementation that are based on their lived experience (rather than on a story pushed down their throat), creating a sense of de-familiarization with the change implementation process. As a result: *"For us, the strategy and the change is a far from our bed show, that happens somewhere at the headquarters"* (Expert8), or *"decisions are made 2 levels up in the hierarchy, what can we do about it?"* (Expert10). Employees make sense of change in a highly detached way: not only is change something out there' and not 'in here', it is also something that happens 'far away' somehow in the organization, and occasionally approaches closer by on top on 'normal' work.

5.3 Discursive Disconnection

The grandiose strategic discourse adopted by Expert's MT created a disconnection in Expert's staff sense-making process of change: the formulated strategy and its

dissemination was dissociated from implementation and real life on the ground, which was often labeled as a ‘battle for survival. The disconnection was manifested in an inability of Expert employees to capture the essence of what the change is about, referring to rather operational issues that have a direct impact on their work practice. Beyond a mere discursive replication of the change discourse, a void appeared that was filled with uncertainty, fuzziness, lack of clarity, ambiguity, equivocality, not knowing, not understanding. The result was that on the one hand the strategy or consulting discourse was eagerly espoused, whereas on the other hand the mindset of standardized HR services was still fully adopted: temping logic continued to be enacted under advocacy of an expert discourse. Examples include situations whereby custom-made solutions are advocated and realized through replicating a standardized best-practice project, whereby strategy consulting is attempted at being ‘sold’ through phone prospection, and whereby promotional leaflets and posters are being used as marketing material to ‘sell’ tailor made integral projects that address strategic issues.

5.4 Suppression of Reflexive Capabilities

A major consequence of the restricted corporate discourse and adopted managerialistic logic relates to ‘cognitive closure’ or ‘closed-mindedness’ (Alvesson and Willmott 2012) whereby organizational actors display reduced capabilities of reflexivity during their sense-making. Despite the rationalized technocratic discourse of Expert’s MT the so-called ‘lower echelons’ express some kind of awareness that ‘the plan’ is there and that time will bring clarity as to what will really happen: “*There are things that will come in our direction, but we don’t know what that will be*” (Expert2), “*You have to create a unity and simultaneously search what this unity precisely is*” (MT2), “*We know where we’re supposed to go, but en route, you need to make many more decisions*” (DM2). There is thus a recognition that the strategic plan provides a general direction of the change to be implemented, while eventually the unfolding of the process remains somewhat unknown, reflecting a degree of pragmatism that is part of a ‘way-making’ approach to strategy (Nonaka and Zhu 2012). This recognition was nevertheless not necessarily picked up or acted upon by Expert’s MT: “*although we realized that we were more complex and diverse than we initially thought and that the projects defined represented a mere tactical nature as opposed to diving into the core of our strategy, we nevertheless continued with the steps of our formulation process and identified the 9 project to be carried out*” (PM). Priority is granted to rule-following rather than engaging with the emerging complexity embedded in the change process. Even though reflexivity was present among Expert employees, it was suppressed prior to its potential emergence through the managerialistic approach in managing change.

6 Conclusion: The Role of Reflexivity in a VUCA Context

The case discussed points at the role of reflexivity during sense-making as well as the level of awareness of sense-makers in the sense that “not all choice is aware choice” (Schutz 1979). As such, the issue is not so much whether sense-making micro-processes during organizational change are influenced predominantly by agency or institutional logics, rather, whether sense-makers are aware of their choices, of their decisions, and of their actions. ‘Reflexivity’ presupposes a dialogical and relational activity for critically examining underlying assumptions, discourses and practices of social reality (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004; Cunliffe and Jun 2005). As such, reflexivity represents a situated, engaged, relational and discursive practice, characterized by ‘in-the-moment’ awareness (Keevers and Treleaven 2011) that fosters critical thinking on the impact of social practices, opening the window for new organizational and social realities (Cunliffe and Jun 2005). Reflexivity engages in “questioning the basis of our thinking, surfacing the taken-for-granted rules underlying organizational decisions, and examining critically our own practices and ways of relating with others.” (Cunliffe and Jun 2005, p. 227).

Approaching change reflexively allows to revisit change as “the reweaving of actors’ webs of beliefs and habits of action as a result of new experiences obtained through interactions” (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, p. 570) by its focus on the deep structures of interpretation, sense-making and meaning construction during change. As such, reflexive sense-making of change contributes to a practitioner-oriented and pragmatic reading of an ‘ontology of becoming’ that addresses Tsoukas and Chia’s (2002) reversal of ontological priorities between organizing and change: reflexive sense-making aims at engaging with unfolding chains of events perceptually—rather than conceptually—and with the continual flux of interdependent events that constitute the becoming of reality, labeling change as ‘what is becoming’ rather than the meaningless conceptual label ‘change’.

First, reflexive sense-making of change aims at focusing attention on the deep structures or soft fabric of how change ‘becomes’: by being situationally aware and refrain from adhere to institutionalized interpretations, the focus of change implementation shifts to the flow of emerging activities that is unfolding, rather than on the concepts and labels imposed by the change discourse. Talking change into existence from a reflexive sense-making of change perspective implies focusing on the ‘here and now’, and dropping the conceptual and discursive tools of rational change models, thus generating a deeper understanding of how processes of change unfold and become alive.

Second, reflexive sense-making of change counters the shift from perceptual to conceptual knowing and thus focuses attention to a ‘direct perception’ of ‘what is out there’. And it is this direct perception that “will enable one to get a glimpse of its [change’s] most salient characteristics—its constantly changing texture, its indivisible continuity, the conflux of the same with the different over time” (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, p. 571). By removing pre-interpreted and institutionalized labels favored by rational change models, underlying events and activities that truly

represent change can glimpse into the field of attention of organizational actors. As such, reflexive sense-making of change creates an opportunity to create a new discourse and vocabulary on organizational change that better reflects the process complexities of organizational change. By focusing on the process of becoming rather than on the state of being, and by perceiving rather than conceiving the becoming of change, reflexive sense-making of change embodies an 'ontology of becoming' in the context of implementation processes of change. It is exactly this shifting from conceptual to perceptual sensing that is epitomized by mindfulness: releasing organizational actors from discontinuous and fixed concepts, enabling them to grasp the continuous ever-changing character of reality and the ability to notice things *per se*, as opposed to their conceptualizations.

Third, reflexive sense-making of change loosens the grip of rationalizing, controlling and predicting change by placing a premium on acknowledging and allowing the emergent processes of change to come into existence and engage organizations and their members in 'equivocality work'. Reflexive sense-making of change diminishes the need to deliberately orchestrate change, in favor of the natural emerging of change. Key here is the (cap)ability of organizations to sense that the intrinsic flux of human action constitutes the very essence of reality, and that organization is an attempt at stabilizing this flux. In this sense, 'organizational change' in the mainstream understanding of the construct becomes an oxymoron (Chia 1999). Reflexive sense-making of change focuses attention on the unfolding reality as it presents itself to the organizational actor, before the attempt of 'organization' to stabilize, to take priority over 'change'. Reflexive sense-making of change decouples the pure perception of reality from the cognitive representations that direct interpretation processes of organizational actors, thereby focusing awareness on the ongoing flux before it becomes obscured by rational conceptualizations imposed by organizing, managing and control. Organizational actors develop the capability to cultivate a pure perception of reality, and as such become exposed to the micro-foundations of the becoming of change.

Finally, reflexive sense-making of change acknowledges the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, interdependent and 'becoming' of change given its focus on the here and now, on the unfolding reality as it is presented to and interpreted nonjudgmentally by a beginner's mind, detached from past conceptualizations. As such, changing reflexively loosens the grip of managerialistic 'organization' on change by enabling organizational actors to fully embrace the VUCA context associated with change processes, and by decoupling interpretations of change from predetermined organizational frames in efforts to 'control' and to 'manage' change in a highly rational way.

Reflective Questions

1. How can organizations and their actors become aware of their underlying assumptions driving their sense-making processes of change?

2. How can organizations thrive in a VUCA context and cultivate reflexive capabilities rather than attempting to control volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, and subsequently suppressing their reflexive capabilities?
3. How can organizations balance the pressures from dominant managerialistic economies with the volatile nature of reality in organizational life?

References

- Abrahamson, E. (1996). Management fashion. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(1), 254–285.
- Alvesson, M. (2013). *The triumph of emptiness: Consumption, higher education, and work organization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alvesson, M., & Sköldböck, K. (2009). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA; London: Sage.
- Alvesson, M., & Sveningsson, S. (2008). *Changing organizational culture: Cultural change work in progress*. New York: Routledge.
- Alvesson, M., & Sveningsson, S. (2011). Management is the solution: Now what was the problem? On the fragile basis for managerialism. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 27(4), 349–361.
- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2012). *Making sense of management: A critical introduction* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA; London: Sage.
- Alvesson, M., Bridgman, T., & Willmott, H. (2009). *The Oxford handbook of critical management studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bettis, R. A., & Prahalad, C. K. (1995). The dominant logic—Retrospective and extension. *Strategic Management Journal*, 16(1), 5–14.
- Brown, A. D., Colville, I., & Pye, A. (2014). Making sense of sense-making in organization studies. *Organization Studies*, 36(2), 265–277.
- Chia, R. (1999). A ‘rhizomic’ model of organizational change and transformation: Perspective from a metaphysics of change. *British Journal of Management*, 10(3), 209–227.
- Clegg, S. (2014). Managerialism: Born in the USA. *Academy of Management Review*, 39(4), 566–576.
- Collins, D. (1998). *Organisational change: Sociological perspectives*. London: Psychology Press.
- Cornelissen, J. P., & Werner, M. D. (2014). Putting framing in perspective: A review of framing and frame analysis across the management and organizational literature. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 181–235.
- Cunliffe, A. L., & Easterby-Smith, M. (2004). From reflection to practical reflexivity: Experiential learning as lived experience. In M. Reynolds & R. Vince (Eds.), *Organizing reflection* (pp. 30–46). Hampshire: Ashgate.
- Cunliffe, A. L., & Jun, J. S. (2005). The need for reflexivity in public administration. *Administration & Society*, 37(2), 225–242.
- Dubois, A., & Gadde, L.-E. (2002). Systematic combining: An abductive approach to case research. *Journal of Business Research*, 55(7), 553–560.
- Dubois, A., & Gadde, L.-E. (2014). “Systematic combining”—A decade later. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(6), 1277–1284.
- Gephart, R. P. (2004). Qualitative research and the Academy of Management Journal. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(4), 454–462. doi:10.5465/amj.2004.14438580.
- Greenwood, R., Hinings, C., & Whetten, D. (2014). Rethinking institutions and organizations. *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(7), 1206–1220.
- Greenwood, R., Raynard, M., Kodeih, F., Micelotta, E. R., & Lounsbury, M. (2011). Institutional complexity and organizational responses. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 5(1), 317–371.

- Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action: Vol. 1. Reason and the rationalization of society* (T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Holt, R., & Cornelissen, J. (2013). Sense-making revisited. *Management Learning*. doi:[10.1177/1350507613486422](https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507613486422).
- Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1947/1972). *Dialectic of enlightenment*. New York: Herder and Herder.
- Kanter, R. M., Stein, B. A., & Jick, T. D. (1992). *The challenge of organizational change*. New York: Free Press.
- Keever, L., & Treleaven, L. (2011). Organizing practices of reflection: A practice-based study. *Management Learning*, 42(5), 505–520.
- Klag, M., & Langley, A. (2012). Approaching the conceptual leap in qualitative research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15(2), 149–166.
- Langley, A., & Abdallah, C. (2011). Templates and turns in qualitative studies of strategy and management. *Research Methodology in Strategy and Management*, 6, 201–235.
- Langley, A., Smallman, C., Tsoukas, H., & Van de Ven, A. H. (2013). Process studies of change in organization and management: Unveiling temporality, activity, and flow. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 1–13.
- Lawrence, T. B., Leca, B., & Zilber, T. B. (2013). Institutional work: Current research, new directions and overlooked issues. *Organization Studies*, 34(8), 1023–1033.
- Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics. In D. Cartwright (Ed.), *Field theory in social science*. London: Social Science Chapterbacks.
- Maitlis, S., & Christianson, M. (2014). Sense-making in organizations: Taking stock and moving forward. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 57–125.
- Marcuse, H. (1968). *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society*. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Nonaka, I., & Zhu, Z. (2012). *Pragmatic strategy: Eastern wisdom, global success*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Palmer, R. E. (1969). *Hermeneutics: Interpretation theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Parker, M. (2009). Managerialism and its discontents. In S. R. Clegg & C. D. Cooper (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational behavior: Volume II—Macro approaches* (pp. 85–99). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Prahalad, C. K., & Bettis, R. A. (1986). The dominant logic—A new linkage between diversity and performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 7(6), 485–501.
- Prahalad, C. K., & Bettis, R. A. (2000). The dominant logic—A new linkage between diversity and performance. *Advances in Strategic Management*, 17, 119–141.
- Prasad, A. (2002). The contest over meaning: Hermeneutics as an interpretive methodology for understanding texts. *Organizational Research Methods*, 5(1), 12–33. doi:[10.1177/1094428102051003](https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428102051003).
- Prasad, A., & Mir, R. (2002). Digging deep for meaning: A critical hermeneutic analysis of CEO letters to shareholders in the oil industry. *Journal of Business Communication*, 39(1), 92–116.
- Prasad, A., & Prasad, P. (2002). The coming of age of interpretive organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 5, 4–11.
- Rescher, N. (1996). *Process metaphysics: An introduction to process philosophy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Ritzer, G. (1998). *The McDonaldization thesis: Explorations and extensions*. London: Sage Publications.
- Sandberg, J. (2005). How do we justify knowledge produced within interpretive approaches? *Organizational Research Methods*, 8(1), 41–68.
- Sandberg, J., & Tsoukas, H. (2015). Making sense of the sense-making perspective: Its constituents, limitations, and opportunities for further development. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36(S1), S6–S32.
- Schutz, W. (1979). *Profound simplicity*. New York: Bantam Books.

Shepherd, D. A., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2011). Inductive top-down theorizing: A source of new theories of organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 361–380.

Spender, J.-C. (1989). *Industry recipes*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Taylor, J. R., & Van Every, E. J. (1999). *The emergent organization: Communication as its site and surface*. London: Routledge.

Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., & Lounsbury, M. (2012). *The institutional logics perspective: A new approach to culture, structure, and process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tsoukas, H. (1994). Refining common sense: Types of knowledge in management studies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 31(6), 761–780.

Tsoukas, H., & Chia, R. (2002). On organizational becoming: Rethinking organizational change. *Organization Science*, 13(5), 567–582.

Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). *Engaged scholarship: A guide for organizational and social research*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Van de Ven, A. H., & Poole, M. S. (1995). Explaining development and change in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 510–540.

Weber, K., & Glynn, M. A. (2006). Making sense with institutions: Context, thought and action in Karl Weick’s theory. *Organization Studies*, 27(11), 1639–1660.

Weick, (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2d ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.

Weick, (1995). *Sense-making in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Weick, Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sense-making. *Organization Science*, 16(4), 409–421.

Alain Guiette, Ph.D. is lecturer at the Department of Management at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) in the field of management, organization and strategy. He teaches in several graduate programs at the University of Antwerp, Antwerp Management School and is visiting faculty at the Goa Institute of Management, India, and James Madison University, USA. He obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Antwerp on the topic of sense-making of organizational change processes. His research has been published in the *European Management Journal*, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *Research in Competence-based Management*, and *Management Learning*, among others. Prior to re-joining the academic community, he worked 10 years in consultancy, both at Deloitte and McKinsey & Company. His research interests include sense-making, phenomenology, organizational change, critical management studies, process metaphysics, mindfulness and reflexivity.

Koen Vandembemt, Ph.D. is Professor of strategic management and associate dean of internationalization at the Faculty of Applied Economics (University of Antwerp, Belgium). He is also a faculty member of Antwerp Management School (Belgium) where he is involved in executive education and customer specific programs. His research interests focus on strategic re-orientation and strategic renewal in industrial markets and sense-making processes in general. His work has been published in *Long Range Planning*, *Management Learning*, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *Human Relations* and other outlets. He has also visiting teaching positions at universities in Russia, the US and India.

Living and Leading in a VUCA World: Response-Ability and People of Faith

Nazarina Jamil and Maria Humphries-Kil

All major religious traditions carry basically the same message that is love, compassion, and forgiveness . . . the important thing is they should be part of our daily lives.
Dalai Lama

1 Introduction

Living and leading mindfully as witness to and participants in a VUCA world—a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world—calls us to respond to some of the most dangerous abuses known in human history. ISIL is trying to conquer the world with a form of extremism increasingly attractive to many young people in diverse places. Neo-Nazism is gathering strength in Europe and beyond. Xenophobia is rife not only in South Africa.¹ Genocide is occurring in Myanmar² where many are fleeing the country only to be confronted with abuse and exploitation wherever they go.³ Conflicts in the Middle East and Africa are driving large numbers of people to

¹<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/foreign-shop-owner-set-alight-south-africa-150227061954428.html>

²<http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2014/11/burma-genocide/>

³<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/101east/2014/11/malaysia-unwanted-20141118111742722400.html>

N. Jamil (✉)

Waikato Management School, Hamilton, New Zealand

Labuan Faculty of International Finance, Universiti Malaysia Sabah Labuan International Campus, Labuan Federal Territory, Malaysia

e-mail: nazarina@ums.edu.my; nbj1@students.waikato.ac.nz

M. Humphries-Kil

Waikato Management School, Hamilton, New Zealand

e-mail: mariah@waikato.ac.nz

dangerous and deadly journeys to hope-for freedom or safety.⁴ In nations long thought of as ‘the developed world’ many people live in poverty, many cannot access necessary health care, many are homeless, and all are vulnerable to the impacts of polluted environments, overly engineered food sources, and growing piles of waste. Not only is much of humanity under duress, but the planet is at the brink of destruction. Eradication of rainforests for so called development, overfishing of the seas to the point of exhaustion, the unregulated drilling and extracting of natural energy resources, and increased emission of greenhouse gases intensify global warming affect climate change, and exacerbate a myriad of social, political, economic and environmental conflicts. The prevailing economic logic, corporate-friendly laws and policies, the weakness of political influence, the immediate needs of the people, and the disengagement of the masses are just some of the entangled threads of the organization of our humanity that are disrupting social and ecological systems globally to the point of destruction. This environmental destruction exacerbates further economic, political, and social disruption and impacts directly and indirectly on the quality of human life—for some to the point of death.

Our world—our way of being human—is becoming ever more VUCA. Our concern is not with the preparation of more agile managers and business leaders who can make rapid and continuous instrumental adaptations to people, processes, technologies, and structures in the interests of their organizations in this rapidly changing environment. It is with the responsibility to address this dismal picture. Responsibility for this VUCA world lies with humanity. It lies with us as individuals and as members of the communities, organizations, and nations through which we organize our relationships on and with Earth. Our collective (in)action has failed to find a pattern of sustainable development that is universally just, justly inclusive, and restorative of the planet.

In this time of exacerbating disruptive environments, Kinsinger (2015) urges managers and leaders to let go of traditional organizational paradigms and to design new ones, to develop the ability to contribute to the transformation of damaging ways of being, and to develop new skills that enable constructive work with the contradictions and paradoxes that are inevitable in the VUCA world. He calls for a more self-directed behaviour and enhanced mindfulness of the causes and consequences of our actions. We wish to contribute to this call through our contribution to management education.

Mainstream management education generated from euro-western management theories of past generations have been criticized on a number of dimensions. Mintzberg (2004) laments the ‘silo-type’ curriculum that emphasizes the limited scope of functional specialties (i.e. marketing, human resources, finance, etc.) to guide the future. Ghoshal (2005) points to the propagating of “ideologically amoral theories” (p. 76) that steers students away from a sense of moral responsibility and perpetuates an “epistemology of formalized falsification” (p. 81), which relies on selective mathematical and scientific modelling. Giacalone and Promislo (2013) review the rise in attentiveness to moral education and business ethics in management

⁴<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2015/05/migrants-gamble-life-mediterranean-150520070949956.html>

education. Despite this attentiveness however, they note “unethical decisions continue to take place” (p. 87). They attribute this seeming intransigence to the baggage students bring into the classroom generated from a materialistic culture that disparages goodness by its stigmatization (pp. 86–87).

We believe there is an urgent need for transdisciplinary education for managers and aspiring leaders. In our response to the growing critique of management and management education, we advocate for greater attention to faith traditions. All known faith traditions posit universal loving relationships. Giacalone and Promislo (2013) call this “an ethics of care” (p. 86), a need and a mandate to emphasize to our students “the benefits of interconnection, caring, and shared interests” (p. 86). It might be called a form of goodness.

At the Opening Ceremony of the 2015 Parliament of the World’s Religions, Imam Malik Mujahid, Chair of the Board of Trustee of this Parliament, suggests that

...faith and religion are respected in the eyes of many people. When they speak up, there is a whole lot of world that listens to them, including people who are policy makers. . . .

In this chapter, we express our reflections from the calling and recommendations of the 2015 Parliament of the World Religions. As management educators, we seek to influence the realm of our reach. We commit to taking action through our contribution to a transformational management education. To contribute to such transformation, we encourage the exploration of diverse faiths, spiritual wisdom and creativity, empowerment and commitment, inspiration and beauty to enrich a universally just, peaceful and sustainable future. While there are many secular ways to do this in a management class, in this chapter we recommend the inclusion of Divine principles and teachings and the potential of interfaith collaborations to live and lead in the VUCA world.

Greater understandings of interfaith influence in the VUCA world may address the amoral socialization that Giacalone and Promislo (2013) see sometimes “hiding in the corner of our classrooms” (p. 87). This socialization impedes the dissemination and acceptance of ethics concepts and renders students ethically broken. They draw attention to a broadly manifest materialistic ideology that nurtures self-centered values and encourages the demonization of goodness. This ethical brokenness is then intensified through a form of management education that teaches clever double speak and impression management that exacerbates the embedded cultural imposition of a stigma on goodness. Once stigmatized, the call of the ethical protagonist can be ignored. Deflection from self-reflection is vindicated. Giacalone and Promislo (2013) urge us to “teach students not only to learn better ethical decision making, not only to avoid the stigmatization of goodness, but also to live a virtuous life and build a virtuous world” (p. 96). Their call assumes the capacity of our students to recognize and aspire to such aspirations. We believe all humans have such capacities—but not all will want to enact them. For those who do, we believe a call to spiritual values can invigorate nascent or dormant ethical impulses and channel the confluence of faith, hope, and love as necessary qualities for enhancing transformational consciousness. The focus we thus bring to this chapter may contribute to enhanced creativity and deepened ethical commitment in management education for a “world worth living in” (p. 189) as advocated for by Muff et al. (2013).

2 Globalization and the VUCA World

The acronym VUCA—volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity—is a concept that was introduced by the U.S. Army War College in the early 1990s to describe the extreme conditions after the Cold War. It has become a ‘catchy’ managerial acronym when companies and organizations around the world are facing turbulence in their business environment and are engaged in continuous changes in challenging and dynamic landscapes in order to survive and ‘stay on top of their game’. We believe the intensification of globalization and of the VUCA world are inter-connected and that large corporations have a significant influence on this situation.

Respected experts from across professional and scholarly disciplines agree that large corporations have a significant influence in shaping the global economy and the state of humanity and the planet. Critics of the contemporary trajectory of globalization argue these corporations have more power to influence the global situation than the government of many individual countries. Vitali et al. (2011) for example studied the relationships between 37 million companies and investors worldwide. They report that 147 corporations (super entities) control 40% of world wealth. Their investment and divestment decisions may moderate local values and establish patterns of work and community life that may be harmful to local citizens yet be of insufficient interests to local or distant political leaders.

Pilger (2003) demonstrates how multinational corporations and governments urged on by wide-reaching development logic such as emanating from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), have a profound influence on the lives of millions of people throughout the world. Gilens and Page (2014) argue that an American oligarchy has staged a slow coup d’état over the US foreign and domestic policy. This influence serves to enrich a minority, underpins the privileges of an elite class, provides uneven levels of sustenance and deprivation across time and space for the majority, and tolerates death and destruction as necessary for the protection of the system that ensures their privilege. These dynamics contribute to systemically provoked violence, increase in tolerance of hate speech, and to the triggering of wars that are justified by claims to necessary access to resources and the intensification of economic opportunities. Gilens and Page (2014) assert that the oligarchy that has taken policy control behind a thin facade of democracy is the major force for war and disorder across the planet. Competition for access to Earth’s resources and environmental degradation associated with consumer driven ways of life exacerbate the dangers currently articulated as issues of climate change.

Klein (2014) argues that most people in the world are in denial about the catastrophic reality facing humanity because we are compromised and pacified by the consumerism entailed in a free market fundamentalist ideology driven by the political and corporate elites who run the world. Korten (2015) agrees. “*After almost a lifetime of adherence to an economic doctrine that promises consumer comforts to the world’s poor, I came to see the connection between the story lens of economics and business education, and the social and environmental degradation I*

was witnessing. Public policies shaped by that lens were shifting power from people and nations to global corporations and financial markets delinked from moral sensibility and public accountability” (Korten 2015, p. 7).

Together with Korten (2015) we suggest that the dominant story of our time, a story that claims globalization to be the path to universal emancipation and environmental flourishing, is a flawed story. Taking the awakening of concerns about the social, political and economic conditions facing our humanity and the Earth’s degradation as our focus, we are motivated to consider the darker side of the intensifying form of globalization, the VUCA environment, and the efficacy of the currently favored remedies to the harmful outcomes increasingly associated with it. Like Korten (2015), we look to faith and spiritual values to shine a light on a path to a radical transformation of this trajectory.

3 Religion: A Source of Grievances or the Power to Heal?

Integration of religious and spiritual values in secular institutions may be viewed by some as disruptive—to be prudently separated from the realms of professional vocation and activities of trade and exchange. In contrast to those who believe that secularisation is the means to reduce the opportunity for some to harness religious beliefs to material and spiritual conflict, others believe that religious and spiritual values activation may contribute to the transformation of degradations that are systemically generated. For such advocates, the call for people of faith to contribute to the restorative principles in the trajectory of globalization has never been as important as it is in this VUCA world where the dynamics of globalization remain capricious. The Pope, the Dalai Lama, and other religious leaders are voicing their distress and disappointment at the state of the world through their sermons, public speeches, articles, press releases and social media. There are calls for such leadership to be amplified. For instance, the President of the British Science Association, Lord May, in his opening speech at the British Science Association festival at the University of Surrey in September 2009, urges religious leaders and faith groups to lead in helping to regulate the social behaviors of communities in engaging with environmental challenges.⁵ He seeks to realize the significance of religion in uniting communities to tackle environmental issues. In a similar vein, The United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, in his message at the 2013 Assembly of World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan, South Korea stated that our world today is beset by challenges that cross geographical, cultural and religious lines. Climate change, poverty, environmental degradation, conflict and other threats demand a global response by governments along with other partners, including non-governmental organizations and religious groups. As we focus on broad global challenges, we must pay close attention to people as key agents of change. Religious leaders can have an enormous influence on their

⁵<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/sep/07/global-warming-religion>

followers, and are well-placed to help bring about a change in mindsets that can lead to progress in society.⁶

Ban Ki-Moon invites the world's people of diverse faiths to help shape the global debate on social, political and economic measures for the Post 2015 Development Agenda. In June 2014, Olav Kjørven, Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, attributes the limited success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in certain areas and countries, and the perceived weaknesses of MDGs to the fact that they had been drafted by technocrats and economists whose focus was narrowly materialist.⁷ Thus he claims, religious faith lenses are needed to provide a moral compass for the next phase of the globalisation agenda for which the United Nations seeks to advance the universalizing values inscribed in its charter.

In February 2015, The World Bank reached out to the faith community to work together in battling extreme poverty. World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim, said even though World Bank is a secular organization and does not bend to any religious denomination, the development of faith partnerships is central because they too share a commitment to the world's poorest and most vulnerable.⁸ The call for a more explicit faith and spiritual engagement invites an exploration of the kinds of tensions explored by Huntington (1993) in his theory about the clash of civilization. He proposed that people's cultural and religious identities would be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. The call invites specific commitment to minimize such tension by finding opportunities to work with people of faith in all their diversity to bring forth contemporary expressions of ancient religious and spiritual visions for humanity.

4 Living and Leading in the VUCA World: Unity in Diversity

Many faith and spiritual traditions promote simplicity, frugality, empathy, interconnectedness and other spiritual values that give support and guidance for living in the VUCA world. This does not imply that such values have or should have uniform expression. The 2015 Parliament of the World's Religion is an example of the diversity possible in such expression. As one of the largest, oldest, and most inclusive gathering of peoples from various faiths and traditions, the Parliament is a much needed assembly to discuss the depressing issues of war, violence, hatred, climate change, wastefulness and wealth disparity. The presence of approximately

⁶<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/?nid=7239>

⁷<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/history-in-the-making-an-unprecedented-visit-to-ise-jingu-japans-holiest-shrine-to-see-it-rebuilt-under-the-beliefs-of-the-shinto-religion-9555482.html>

⁸<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/04/09/global-religious-faith-based-organization-leaders-issue-call-commitment-end-extreme-poverty-2030>

9500 people from 50 different faiths included Christians, Buddhist, Jewish, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Pagans, and indigenous faiths from all over the world. All are grounded in faith with a call to unite together with love, compassion, and forgiveness. A respectful curiosity about the potential contribution of other faiths was expressed through the theme of the Parliament: *“Reclaiming the Heart of our Humanity: Working together for a World of Compassion, Peace, Justice, and Sustainability”*. The theme expressed something powerful and transformative. Physically, our heart is a muscular organ in our body that pump blood throughout our body. It provides us with oxygen and nutrients. Without it our body cannot function. Spiritually, our heart is the innermost part that deals with our emotions, desires and instincts. It is our spiritual heart that guides our inner peace and wellbeing, and reflects the positivity or negativity of our words and actions.

We invite questions about when, where, and how we lose or diminish the power of the spiritual heart to pump the values of love and peace through the body-corporate we call humanity. How can we invigorate this heart? How can people of faith contribute to this divine calling through spiritual practice, daily living and engagement in work? How might the Parliament stimulate and nurture the heart potential of humanity? How would the world transform if we collectively invigorate the potential of the spiritual heart? There are widespread documentations of deep grief about the current state of our humanity, about the continuing devastation of our Earth, the violence we commit upon one another, and the greed, fear and hatred that seem to fuel it all. Emotions of devastation and fear may come with attention to reports on exacerbating natural or human-made catastrophe. Will terror, violence and war be stopped? Can climate change be reversed? Is there still hope for our humanity? We invoke people of faith to be energized by faith, hope, and love so that together we will invigorate the spiritual heart needed to transform the dangerous and unjust trajectory of our humanity. The Parliament of the World’s Religion provides a significant platform to support such invigoration. At the opening ceremony of the Parliament, Imam Malik Mujahid, the Chair of Parliament, spoke to the audience: *Let us engage the guiding institution. Let us work together for a better world, a world with peace, justice, a world which is sustainable. . . This is the only earth we have. And as God’s creation, it is important that not only we live a life of less wastefulness, we share more and consume less.*

Religious practices may be misused as a cause for division and injustice, betraying the very ideals and teachings that lie at the heart of each of the world’s great traditions. However, religious and spiritual traditions have shaped the lives of billions of people with wisdom and ideal teachings in wonderful ways. The Governor of Utah, Gary Herbert, spoke to the importance of voices of people of faith in creating a world of peace, justice and sustainable. *Harmony is needed more now than ever and the world before us. Clearly world’s religion has a role to play in achieving that goal. While there have been abuses of religions in our historical past, the abundance of goodwill, of hope and faith has brought to us by religion, improving people’s life and communities, instilling good and noble values in each of us and moving us to action is what religion all about. What in the media is the*

bad side of life, good news never sells but bad news does. Religion must play an indispensable part in establishing harmony and uplifting humanity.

Diverse expressions of faith do not diminish its universal value. All expressions of faith are not and need not be the same. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (2003) posits that God created a world of diversity and made one great covenant with humanity in which humans must have faith. Sacks (2003) warns of “. . .the danger of wishing that everyone should be the same—(of) the same faith on the one hand, the same McWorld on the other [as a way] to prevent the clash of civilizations” (p. 209).

People can be enlarged by the differences among them. Believers are urged to tolerate, validate and accept the religious and spiritual beliefs of others, and to work with their differences towards synergies for peace, justice and environmental restoration (F.E. Woods, personal communication, May 20, 2015). Such religious influence is enhanced not diminished by its respect for religious diversity, argues Sacks (2003). Hence, argue those with a high tolerance for religious diversity, religious and spiritual practices can be called upon to unite the world’s peoples despite differences in religious beliefs. Sacks (2005) also claims that religion is the best moral framework for society. In the same vein, Dixon (2008) states, that many today argue that religious beliefs are necessary to provide moral guidance and standards of virtuous conduct in an otherwise corrupt, materialistic, and degenerate world. Religions certainly do provide a framework within which people can learn the difference between right and wrong (p. 115).

People of specific faith and spiritual beliefs cannot provide all or the only direction needed to transform the trajectory of globalization. However, we are convinced that people of faith can make a creative contribution to the generation of a societal order that is universally just and restorative of the planet. The 2015 Parliament of the World’s Religion has shown this.

The plenary sessions and most other sessions of the Parliament started with prayers in different languages and from different religions. More than one included singing. All expressed messages of love, unity, peace and harmony, and made reverent pleas from God/the Divine/The Sacred to bless the assembly. At every plenary and conference session people shared aspirations and wisdom from their faith community and inspired the translation of beliefs into actions. People freely expressed their beliefs and religious rituals through their attire and behavior. Sikhs with turbans and beards, Muslims women with headscarves and long dresses, Buddhist monks with orange robes and bald heads, and Native Americans with their feathery headgear added vibrancy to the event. Diverse expressions of faith were evident not only in the physical appearances of participants but also in the voices speaking in harmony to bring a form of unity deeply respectful of difference. A memorable and magnificence experience was the Sikh’s ‘Langar’ (free kitchen). As an expression of their faith, a Sikh organization (the Nishkam Center) provided free vegetarian lunches to everyone who attended the Parliament, regardless of their faith. *Langar* is designed to uphold the principles of equality between people and express the acts of sharing, community, inclusiveness and oneness of all human-kind. The statement “*Consume less, waste less and share more*” by Imam Malik is showcased in the experience of *Langar*.

As Parker et al. (2014) believe, it is ethically and politically important that there are alternative ways to reorganise and transform the market managerialism that enables this dangerous form of globalization. People with religious and spiritual convictions can contribute to the consideration of alternative ethical and moral responses for the wellbeing of our humanity and their relationship with Earth. People of faith can attend to the prevalence of the instrumental and material institutional logics the speakers of 2015 Parliament of the Worlds' Religions have named as limited and limiting for the future of humanity. It is to the value of diversity, to the potential gifts to be found in apparent paradox and contradiction we now turn our attention.

5 Paradox and Contradictions: The Seedbed for Engaging in the VUCA World?

Elements of the growing critique of capitalism are finding a hearing in the very core institutions of its advocates. For example, in a move away from decades of ignoring critics of its promotion of liberal economic orthodoxy, the World Economic Forum invited leaders from business, banking, labour union and academic sectors to serve as panelists at their meeting in 2012. The gathering acknowledged the concerns of critics. After due consideration, the Forum proclaimed that while capitalism may not be the best possible system for the achievement of the expressed ideals of universal inclusion and sustainable global development, “all other possible systems are far worse than capitalism”.⁹ Such seeming paradox deserves more attention.

Despite the recognized dangers of the system, advocates of capitalism are telling the world that they are on the right track and humanity should forge ahead led by the leaders of this trajectory. They assert the problems associated with this form of development will be solved in due time. Wise investment in clean technology, new political alliances, agreements and treaties to provide access to the needed water, minerals, dumping sites and markets of workers and consumers will morph humanity into an interdependent, self-regulating and fairly governed family—a world community resourced by the wealth generation of corporate-led global development. Or so the exponents of the dominant narrative would have the global population believe—even as they attempt to assimilate the views of their critics and to find room for people of faith to voice their concerns and contribute their remedies to undeniable system-generated social and environmental degradation.

The prevailing trajectory of globalization projected by advocates of corporate capitalism reveals a deep paradox or contradiction. They acknowledge systemically generated social and environmental degradation while simultaneously promoting values of sustainable justice and environmental responsibilities as the mandate for their continued leadership and control over the future of humanity. An example of such advocacy is expressed by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). The

⁹<http://www.weforum.org/videos/time-davos-debate-capitalism-annual-meeting-2012>

United Nations invites corporate-led engagement in ethical global development through the promotion of greater Corporate Responsibility (CR). The vehicle for this responsibility is to be the very global market that is claimed by critics to be the cause of so much havoc in the lives of so many people and on the life of the planet. A privileging of liberal market values that preserve the privileged position of a small portion of the human population continues to be imposed on vulnerable people with dire consequences for many. In 2013 for example, Pope Francis named unfettered capitalism “a new tyranny”. He stated that “*today we also have to say ‘thou shalt not’ to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills*”.¹⁰ Borrowing from the teaching of Archbishop Rowan Williams (2012) in his book *Faith in the Public Square*, we are reminded that maintaining wealth at the cost of our neighbor’s disadvantage is wrong.

Contradictions, paradox and inconsistencies are evident when looking to organizational mandates generated from religious or spiritual paradigms. The degradations of people and the planet run counter to the theology of love, justice, and righteousness held in common by most widely practiced religions. According to Cox and Ikeda (2009) people tend to pursue material wealth with increasing greediness. It is an unbridled greed characteristic of modern societies. People of faith and their institutions have not always resisted such greed. Some may mistakenly see the accumulation of material wealth as evidence of divine blessings. Their attention may be deflected from the cost to others of their systemic privilege. For some, faith teachings and values appear to be losing their influence in the face of technological and scientific advancement, the development of market economy and urbanization. Faith and spiritual leaders are calling them to renew devotion to values that may fly in the face of what is now so commonly taken for granted. The moral and ethical imperative of loving our neighbor can lead us from greed to kindness, from economic disparity to economic justice. It is not that religion is against ‘The Market’ or globalization but calls for a critique of the way these are organized. How then can we encourage the noted contradictions and paradoxes be turned to outcomes that are universally just and restorative of the planet in this VUCA environment?

We build on work by Seo and Creed (2002) who posit that noting contradictions can be fruitful when seeking transformation. Attention to contradictions can provide a framework for engaging with systemically embedded ambiguity and paradox not so as to collapse differences into an unrealistic and false universal order, but to work from points of ambiguity, contradiction, or paradox towards desirable transformations. We work cautiously with their ideas. Experience tells us that the call for transformation and the power to transform can easily be harnessed to system-preserving adaptation.

¹⁰<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/26/pope-francis-capitalism-tyranny>

6 Management Education as a Catalyst for Transformation

Business schools have been characterized by Muff et al. (2013) as a breeding ground for a culture of greed and self-enrichment at the expense of the rest of the society and of nature. Parker et al. (2014) state that students are infused with a worldview that places significant value on consumerism while neglecting important issues of a social, political and environmental nature. Giacalone and Promislo (2013) alert us to a form of double speak. We see this double speak in much management education through an appeal to [systemic] efficiency and the need for growth—while seemingly blind to the suffering of many caused by this system. When taught without critical thought given to the dangers of ‘business as usual’ the dangers are intensified and become increasingly destructive. Such a destructive trajectory stands in contrast to the universal freedom and justice implied in western liberal ideology. Such a contrast may be taken up as a fruitful paradox—a place on which to focus our gaze and from which to search for an ethical response. We posit that one opportunity to engage with paradox and ambiguities that we would come across in the VUCA world lies with the reinvention of management education as urged by the United Nations’ Principles for Responsible Management Education (UNPRME) generated from the United Nation Global Compact (UNGC). The UNPRME represent a collaborative effort between UN and higher education to embed corporate responsibility and sustainability to the core mission and learning activities of business schools.¹¹

Taking this opportunity into applied consideration, Muff et al. (2013) call for a vocation to reinvent management education in service of the common good. They believe business education can step up to this call by holding and creating a space to educate and develop globally responsible leaders, enabling business organizations to serve the common good, and engaging in the transformation of business and the economy for a sustainable world. They posit such transformation needs management educators to encourage those being prepared for organizational leadership to examine their values, knowledge, experience and expertise to co-create organizational processes for a world worth living in. We agree with them that we cannot limit our creative talent to concern ourselves only with questions of how much profit can be made, how costs can be minimized, or how investments can be protected as a first priority. With Muff et al, we argue that systemically generated degradations cannot transform such degradation by more intensified application of the same system that causes them. With them, we call for faith and spiritual wisdom in organizational practices and for the enhancement of creativity in management education, encouraged also by Giacalone and Promislo (2013), Cox and Ikeda (2009) and Epstein (2002). A response can be initiated and enhanced in management education. We reflect on a speech given at the Parliament of the World’s Religion by Dr. Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford, speech at the Parliament.

¹¹<http://www.unprme.org/about-prme/the-six-principles.php>

Education is the starting point. It starts with self-education in which we self-discipline ourselves. . . it has to do with empathy, compassion, forgiveness and we should never start talking about peace without connecting peace with justice, dignity, and freedom. It also takes courage. The spiritual dimension starts with ourselves.

Suffice to say that there is increasing awareness in organizational and management disciplines of the need and possibility to infuse faith and spiritual teachings and values in corporate operations and activities as well as in the management education. For example, there is an expanding management literature regarding the role of spirituality and religions in management (Bouckaert and László 2011; Delbecq 2009; Epstein 1998; Schwartz 2011; Weaver and Agle 2002) and the associated courses on Management and Spirituality (Delbecq 2000). Scholars within the Academy of Management have formed an interest group on Management, Spirituality and Religion¹² and established the *Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion*.¹³ The Harvard Business School and the Harvard Divinity School are collaborating to introduce the *Business across Religious Tradition (BART)* seminars.¹⁴ There are also business schools such as the *Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences of International Islamic University Malaysia* that instill Islamic values and ethics, and *School of Business and Leadership of Colorado Christian University* that instill the faith in Jesus Christ in their teaching and learning. These are significant developments.

In the time where religion has been seen as the catalyst for violence rather than peace, we dare to believe that faith and spiritual teachings can be a source to heal our fractured world. But it must be a critically reflective faith and a well-grounded form of spirituality. Sacks (2005) is certain that if religion is not made a part of the solution, it will become part of the problem in many violent conflicts throughout the world. Courage and imagination must manifest as love. He posits all expression of faith are not and need not be the same, people can be enlarged by the differences among them. Thus, religious and spiritual values can call upon to unite the world's people despite differences in religious and spiritual beliefs. Education in 'respect of difference' is an urgent call to equip students for interfaith engagement and leadership both in the classroom and beyond. Education on such topics is critical not only to counter religious illiteracy and insensitivity, but also to prepare students for leadership and civic responsibility in a VUCA world.

Sacks (2003) and Knitter (2007, 2011) urge that dialogue is imperative. Interfaith dialogue can encourage those potential organizational leaders to re-think and re-evaluate their values, knowledge and expertise to co-create organizations that prioritize concern for the positive wellbeing of people and the Earth. Even though interfaith dialogue can inspire communities across religious borders to engage in healing the fractured world, management educators have to be cautious and treat

¹²<http://group.aomonline.org/msr/>

¹³<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rmsr20#.VV6kebmqpBc>

¹⁴<http://hds.harvard.edu/faculty-research/conferences-and-seminars/business-across-religious-traditions>

unity and universality with critical caution. Wilfred (2008, p. 76) observes that unity and universality “could become a cloak to cover the vested interests of the upper castes and classes. True unity is the result of dialogue, negotiation, mutuality, and not a matter of fitting everything into a ready-made system.”

7 Conclusion

The broadened awakening of concerns about the degraded state of our humanity and of planet Earth among management teachers is a significant and necessary step towards systemic transformation. But it is difficult to know where to place one’s energies in the face of such huge challenges before us. We draw on Bauman and Donskis (2013) to urge each other to *not* deflect our attention from the difficulties when we feel disturbed by what we become aware of but do not (yet) have a remedy for. We urge each of us to keep our eye on that which is disturbing. Bauman and Donskis call this sustained gaze an ethical gaze. We stand with them. So too we stand with the call of the 2015 Parliament of the World’s Religion to translate our commitment to our faith and spirituality to our daily activities and work together despite our differences in navigating in this VUCA world. For management educators, we can create new stories to channel the influence to bring faith, hope and love into ways of being human that can change the way we organize our relationship with other human beings and our relationship with the Earth. To instill respect for faith and spiritual values that may bring a commitment to love and compassion into the scholarship of teaching and learning, management educators must have courageous to speak up and act out. Adler and Hansen (2012) indicate that courage can transform convictions and compassion into action. Management educators can be the daring defenders and advocates of faith and spiritual values in living and leading in this VUCA world for a world of compassion, peace, justice and sustainable—a world we think is worth working for.

Reflective Questions

1. What are the benefits and risks of inviting a more overt conversation about religious views into the management classroom?
2. Can spiritual values be invoked without reference to specific faith traditions?
3. We can teach ethical theories. Students can learn to repeat them. But how can students and teachers strengthen moral fortitude through management education?
4. When, where, and how can we enlarge or diminish the power of the spiritual heart to pump the values of love and peace through the body-corporate we call humanity?
5. Can you think of examples when specific religious values or icons have been used to exacerbate self-serving sectorial interests against the interest of the common good?

6. How would the world transform if we collectively invigorate the potential of the spiritual heart?

References

- Adler, N. J., & Hansen, H. (2012). Daring to care: Scholarship that supports the courage of our convictions. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 21(2), 128–139.
- Bauman, Z., & Donskis, L. (2013). *Moral blindness: The loss of sensitivity in liquid modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bouckaert, L., & László, Z. (2011). *The Palgrave handbook of spirituality and business*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cox, H. G., & Ikeda, D. (2009). *The persistence of religion: Comparative perspectives on modern spirituality*. New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Delbecq, A. L. (2000). Spirituality for business leadership: Reporting on a pilot course for MBAs and CEOs. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 117–128. doi:10.1177/105649260092005.
- Delbecq, A. L. (2009). Spirituality and business: One scholar's perspective. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 6(1), 3–13. doi:10.1080/14766080802648599.
- Dixon, T. (2008). *Science and religion: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Epstein, E. M. (1998). Catholic social teaching and education in business and economics: A non-Catholic's perspective. *Review of Business*, 19(4), 23.
- Epstein, E. M. (2002). Religion and business: The critical role of religious traditions in management education. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 38(1/2), 91–96. doi:10.1023/A:1015712827640.
- Ghoshal, S. (2005). Bad management theories are destroying good management practices. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(1), 75–91.
- Giacalone, R. A., & Promislo, M. D. (2013). Broken when entering: The stigmatization of goodness and business ethics education. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 12(1), 86–101. doi:10.5465/amle.2011.0005A.
- Gilens, M., & Page, B. I. (2014). Testing theories of American politics: Elites, interest groups, and average citizens. *Perspectives on Politics*, 12(03), 564–581. doi:10.1017/S1537592714001595.
- Huntington, S. P. (1993). The clash of civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 22–49.
- Kinsinger, P. (2015). *Adaptive leadership for the VUCA world: A tale of two managers*. Retrieved from <http://www.thunderbird.edu/article/adaptive-leadership-VUCA-world-tale-two-managers>
- Klein, N. (2014). *This changes everything: Capitalism vs the climate*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Knitter, P. F. (2007). My god is bigger than your god! *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*, 17(1), 100–118. doi:10.2143/sid.17.1.2022755.
- Knitter, P. F. (2011). Doing theology interreligiously: Union and the legacy of Paul Tillich. *CrossCurrents*, 61(1), 117–132. doi:10.1111/j.1939-3881.2010.00165.x.
- Korten, D. (2015). *Change the story, change the future: A living economy for a living earth*. Oakland, CA: Berret-Koehler.
- Mintzberg, H. (2004). *Managers not MBAs. A hard look at the soft practice of managing and managing development*. Oakland, CA: Berret-Koehler.
- Muff, K., Dyllick, T., & Drewell, M. (2013). *Management education for the world*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Parker, M., Fournier, V., & Land, C. (2014). *The Routledge companion to alternative organization*. New York: Routledge.
- Pilger, J. (2003). *The new rulers of the world*. London: Verso.

- Sacks, J. (2003). *The dignity of difference: How to avoid the clash of civilizations*. London: Continuum.
- Sacks, J. (2005). *The persistence of faith*. New York: Continuum.
- Schwartz, B. (2011). Practical wisdom and organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 31(2011), 3–23. doi:10.1016/j.riob.2011.09.001.
- Seo, M. G., & Creed, W. E. D. (2002). Institutional contradictions, praxis, and institutional change: A dialectical perspective. *The Academy of Management Review*, 27(2), 222–247.
- Vitali, S., Glattfelder, J. B., & Battiston, S. (2011). *The network of global corporate control*. Retrieved from <http://arxiv.org/pdf/1107.5728.pdf>
- Weaver, G. R., & Agle, B. R. (2002). Religiosity and ethical behavior in organizations: A symbolic interactionist perspective. *The Academy of Management Review*, 27(1), 77–97.
- Wilfred, F. (2008). *Margins: Site of Asian theologies*. Delhi: ISPCK.
- Williams, R. (2012). *Faith in the public square*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Nazarina Jamil is a doctoral student in Organizational Studies at Wai-kato Management School, University of Waikato, New Zealand. At the same time, she is a junior academic at Faculty of International Finance, University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia. Her doctoral thesis ex-amines the potential of interfaith collaboration in management education through translating faith and spiritual values into the teaching of love and compassion. Her wider research and teaching interest include interfaith business and leadership, Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME), organizational studies, and ethics and morality in business.

Maria Humphries-Kil is an Associate Professor at the Waikato Management School since 1989. Over the years she has been part of many teaching innovations in management education—management education at her School. These innovations include the first courses in Business, Government and Society, in Feminist Studies, and in the leadership and management of community organization. She has been deeply involved in the closer engagement of students with indigenous wisdom. These innovations each in their own way provide insight into leadership for a VUCA world. Maria is now primarily involved in the supervision of Ph.D.s—wonderfully huge canvasses for thinking deeply about the world we are creating.

Maintaining ‘Respect for Spirituality’ in a Secular Work Environment: A Biographical Account of the Career-Life Journey of a Black Female Practitioner of Declared Faith

Doirean Wilson

1 Introduction

A shift is taking place in both the professional and personal lives of business leaders and employees who now seek to integrate their spirituality and religion at work (Fry and Altman 2013). Many argue that the reason for this is due to society’s need to search for spiritual solutions to better respond to today’s global environment, which is one beset by Volatility Uncertainty Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA), resulting in turbulence due to societal, geopolitical and business changes. This turnaround has provided scope to explore the role of spirituality in molding the way businesses organize their resources and lead and manage their people (Fry and Altman 2013). Consequently, “we are now witnessing a rapidly rising wave of interest in spirituality in management”, a topic of major significance to enterprise leaders (Schmidt-Wilk et al. 2000; Sass 2000; Burack 1999). Globalization’s has rendered organizations more heterogeneous than they used to be. This phenomenon has changed workforces that now yield employees of different genders, cultures and spiritual faith. Some reflect more than one of these characteristics or inter-related axes of identity, such as those belonging to marginalized groups. . .

1.1 Issues of Intersectionality

Crenshaw (1989) coined the term intersectionality described as “the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination” (Davis 2008). Crenshaw recognized how feminist literature viewed race and gender “as mutually exclusive categories of experiences and analysis” so decided to focus her work on

D. Wilson (✉)

Middlesex University Business School London, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BT, UK
e-mail: d.wilson@mdx.ac.uk

black women to “compare the multidimensionality” of their “experience with the single-axis analysis that misrepresents these experiences”.

Crenshaw demonstrated how black-women are theoretically erased due to the tendency to investigate single entities of either ‘blacks’ or ‘women’ instead of acknowledging the existence of ‘black-women’ as a singular group worthy to be explored from a double-axes perspective. This innovative approach is why ‘intersectionality’ is acknowledged as one of the most significant contributions of feminist literature. However, confusion regarding its meaning makes it difficult to know how it should be applied (Davis 2008).

Lutz et al. (2011) acknowledged the significance of the accusations made by black feminists against their white bourgeois counterparts, who only mentioned issues that relate to the oppressive experiences of those of similar to discuss matters of feminine politics. Hence why black women’s reality was destined to be ignored, arguing the need to capture and analyze the multidimensional nature and complexity of ‘their’ lived experiences including their spirituality (ibid). Recognition of these multiple identities in the workplace, arguably would aid their integration that would enable leaders to know how they are lived in practice and within the professional paradigm.

1.2 ‘Mind the Gap’: Spirituality Teachings, Implications and Ensuing Questions

“Although the literature on spirituality in management and the management of spirituality has burgeoned” over the years, “little has been written on teaching about spirituality in management courses or in business organizations” (Barnett et al. 2000). However, “although the literature on teaching spirituality in management is growing, little empirical research on theory or practices has yet been published” (Pandey and Gupta 2008). Therefore, many organizations still remain ignorant of issues regarding workplace spirituality, particularly from the viewpoint of female leaders of faith employed in male dominated secular environments. This chapter explores this notion.

The growth in attention to spirituality “in the theory and practice of management, the field of management education” is beginning to pose questions like, what is spirituality? What are model programs for teaching spirituality? (Pandey and Gupta 2008).

1.3 Spirituality as a Human Perspective and Reasons for Gaps in the Literature

“Spirituality’ is said to be an existential search for meaning and purpose in human life and the role and feeling of linkage within the larger scheme of existence” (Pandey and Gupta 2008). Discussions regarding this topic tend to focus on issues that relate to either academia or the workplace. But how does spirituality impact on

the careers of female leaders of faith employed in the secular world in male dominated work environments? This question would be difficult to answer without insight to written evidence of empirical studies that explore spirituality practices and theory, but this is lacking (Pandey and Gupta 2008).

Skeptics believe spirituality “betokens matters of the spirit worldues of animism, ecstasy, magic and spells” (Flanagan and Jupp 2007), hence limited tolerance for its ideals in the workplace. Spirituality refers to an apparently “incoherent collection of ideas and practices” (Houtman and Aupers 2007). It draws on “multiple traditions, styles, and ideas simultaneously, combining them into idiosyncratic packages”, hence its branding as the “pick-and-mix” or “the do- it-yourself religion” (Hamilton 2000; Baerveldt 1996). This suggests spirituality is associated with those eager to indulge in the realms of a “spiritual supermarket” (Lyon 2013) gorging themselves to subliminal sickness on an abundance of “religious consumption à la carte” (Possamai 2003).

Sociology itself “a member of the humanities, is called to affirm matters of the spirit” and “in doing so it confronts a conundrum peculiar to the discipline” (ibid).

What is evident however, is that spirituality is a new workplace concept that is both subtle and complex, which is why it is difficult to write about (Ashmos and Duchon 2000) Although the 1988 Education Reform Act acknowledges “the importance of spirituality within education, the realities tend to deny scope for much work in this area”. Nonetheless, it would be “premature to speak or write about spirituality in business in the present climate of hedonistic egotism”, (Chakraborty et al. 2004). Furthermore, management “do not understand spirituality so should avoid the need to reduce the concept” down to their “low-level consciousness” (ibid).

However, one might ask whether spirituality has anything to do with “its authentic location in the hinterland of the individual where the self finds its ultimate destination?” (Flanagan and Jupp 2007); this chapter attempts to answer this question by reviewing the working life of Reverend Jessica Meade, a British born black female leader of declared faith, employed in the secular male dominated business-to-business sales world.

1.4 Overview of Chapter and Introduction Summary

This chapter begins with a review of literature to explore the notion of spirituality from an intersectionality of discrimination perspective regarding gender, race, and declared religiosity concerning workplace leadership.

The findings captured from the stories told by the research subject regarding her career experiences as a black female leader of declared faith. These findings provided insight to how the research subject maintained her spirituality in a male dominated secular environment, fraught with discrimination. Insights were gained from other leaders of faith regarding their experiences of simile to identify the implications.

The concluding discussions related to different aspects of spirituality in a work context such as human psychology, organizational behavior, diversity management,

values and faith. These discussions provide scope for critical review and analysis followed by recommendations identified from the findings, to promote awareness of spirituality and intersectionality and its implication at work.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Intersectionality and Self-Righteousness

“*Intersectionality* designates the disadvantages that women experience. This is because their gender category is so closely associated with other disadvantageous social categories” (Banton 2011), such as, their spirituality. The connection between religious beliefs and spirituality to women and leadership is prevalent in Black American history akin to the role of the spirit in promoting socialization in the workplace (Witherspoon and Taylor 2010).

Witherspoon and Taylor (2010) conducted a study, drawing on notions of religio-spirituality based on a narrative analysis of the stories of four Black female school principals in the USA. These stories provided insight to the topic of self-righteousness regarding “the conviction that one’s beliefs and actions are correct” compared with “the alternative beliefs and actions of others” (Falbo and Shepperd 1986). This concept (self-righteousness) is at epidemic proportions not only in the US, but across the globe (ibid). Furthermore, perhaps it is a means for dealing with the challenges endured due to multiple identities in the workplace, which can be nourished by spiritual and religious beliefs. Nevertheless, Witherspoon and Taylor’s review of the intersectionality of gender, race, and religio-spirituality made evident the relationship of past and present understandings, regarding religio-spiritual leadership, topics explored in this chapter.

Intersectionality is recognised in the literature as a valuable analytical tool for examining issues of differences among women and although its growing use is stimulating, it is important to be cautious when utilising the concept, because it is often used ambiguously and inconsistently (Jordan-Zachery 2007). Arguably, self-righteousness is a means for dealing with multiple identities nourished by religious and spiritual beliefs. Moreover, although each identity brings with it a different contextual perspective, what is required is the harmonised stable inner core of the self that acts as a guide for shaping the kinds of behaviours or actions regarded as correct compared to that of others aligned with the notion of self-righteousness (Falbo and Shepperd 1986). Self-righteousness therefore helps to demystify and simplify multiple identities, which in itself can be exhausting as each identity can ask different things resulting in ambiguity and stress that can hinder career success and fulfilment. This further argues a need to integrate simplification to aid clarity and for promoting wellbeing across different paradigms of one’s life.

Reverend Meade is a second generation Caribbean born to parents from the West Indies. Banton (2011) explored this generational perspective when discussing the shift in relations between the black and white communities in England in the late 1950s when Reverend Meade was born. Banton argues that at the time, the indigenous community

assumed people who hailed from the British colonies such as the Caribbean, came to the UK only to visit or to study. But independence meant they were not visiting but settling. This changed the relational dynamics between the white community and the blacks' colonial immigrants forcing the English to re-think their nationality. For some this change was difficult to accept resulting in racism. Xenophobia was more challenging for those BME settlers who represented other marginalised groups such as those with disabilities and people of spiritual-faith. Discriminative mind-sets today are more subtle akin to a virus evolving "into a new form that is difficult to recognise and harder to combat" (Mistry and Latoo 2009). Furthermore, discrimination in the workplace is "negatively associated with various indicators of well-being" (Deitch et al. 2003).

Makkonen (2002), acknowledged that "the right of all persons to equality before the law and protection against discrimination" is what "constitutes a universal human right". Nonetheless, what is evident is that "it is easy to talk about diversity and equality" (Pollitt 2006), which are words that seem to "roll smoothly off the tongue" (ibid). However, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), is a human rights initiative that can either focus on numerous grounds of discrimination, such as gender, disability, race or ethnicity; or, alternatively on one in particular. The notion though "has been that people are, or can be, discriminated against mainly on the grounds of one factor at a time". This suggests that each of these grounds can be addressed separately legally and politically. However, more recently, there is recognition that this is not the whole story, as individuals can represent more than one disadvantaged group all at the same time, and can suffer various forms of discrimination simultaneously, termed "multiple" or "intersectional" discrimination.

As Makkonen (2002) recognized, the concept of intersectional discrimination has far from utilized its potential for four main reasons; (1) the meaning of the term still remains abstract perhaps due to the predominant academic discussion of the topic; (2) human rights organizations' have a tendency to focus on only one ground of discrimination at a time; (3) the concept has only recently being taken into account and is slowly making a breakthrough in the international rights forum; (4) only a few human rights organizations and governments acknowledged it let alone take action. This renders issues of intersectional discrimination an underdeveloped area.

2.2 Spirituality: A Historical Perspective and Further Debates

The world has witnessed "the birth, proliferation, and death of countless religions, belief systems, and philosophies" (Hatcher 1979–1983) that were not devoid of psychological and cultural factors and a shared belief that "man in his naturally given human state" is neither whole or complete until he is able to undergo the process of 'salvation' to achieve spiritual life (Hatcher 1979–1983). Spirituality is "the essence of the human condition—the keystone of a certain vision of reality" (Zsolnai 2011) that does not allow for hypocrisy.

Such concepts exemplify spiritual meanings and their philosophies as the *sine qua non* of spiritual existence. Spiritual development today, is fraught with challenges yet it is both valuable and important to organizational success via the

retention of talented believers such as Reverend Jessica Meade. “Many believe that personal spirituality can be developed outside of religion” (Doggweiler, 2012). However, “one should not use spirituality to develop his or her corporate reputation”, nor should it be perceived as “the last resort solution for management problems” (Zsolnai 2011). Instead it needs to be recognized for what it is—“a free, non-utilitarian option” (ibid). Exploring the career life journey of Reverend Jessica Meade provides opportunity to gain further insights to the implications of spirituality in the workplace from an intersectionality of discrimination viewpoint.

2.3 Spirituality Definitions

Today there is growing interest in workplace spirituality, a concept discussed from many viewpoints and defined in numerous ways so no singular definitive description exists (Krishnakumar and Neck 2002). Definitions range from intelligence, inner experience, and the highest level of any development line (Pandey and Gupta 2008); a higher order greater than oneself, a consciousness of the purpose and a need to develop personal, absolute values (Doggweiler, 2012). These definitions make evident that spirituality focuses on the divine to seek understanding to “live out” key values for achieving personal fulfillment and inner peace.

2.4 Common Discussion Themes in Spirituality

Spirituality discourses focus on spirituality at work regarding performance and organizational effectiveness (Karakas 2010a, b). Or, on management and leadership issues, such as Pruzan (cited in Laszlo 2011), work who believes “recent developments in the theory and practice of management can be better understood and integrated into personal and organizational behavior via spirituality as the context for purposeful behavior”. This suggests organizations can gain from spirituality. Furthermore, “the enormous, recent attention to matters of the spirit in both the academic and practitioner communities”, has resulted in a shift in “management thinking away from its traditional models and paradigms toward” one based on “a wholly new spiritual imperative” (Barnett et al. 2000; Delbecq 1999; Bolman and Deal 2011). The growth in interest in spirituality in the workplace is also evident on the shelves of bookshops and virtual bookstores as discovered by Karakas (2010a, b) who identified “around 1780” via Google Book and 2100 titles on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

In America, around 10,000 prayer groups meet regularly in the workplace, while in Europe, religious influences in leadership and in the organization has declined “as secularization has increased, yet spirituality has emerged as its successor” (Western 2013). Spirituality is “traditionally rooted in religion” therefore leaders of faith are likely to value and seek solace in their spiritual beliefs to buttress their roles and for gaining respect.

A recent study that explored cultural meanings of respect recognized as a core value for all; showed that a lack of awareness of what respect means can result in

disharmony (Wilson 2012). People tend to give others their respect and expect their respect back without realizing that respect in one culture can be disrespect in another. Therefore, when disrespect occurs the assumption is it was deliberate when this might not be the case (ibid). The deficit caused by a “lack of understandings of personal and professional values” leads to a lack of true awareness of a person’s “inner driving forces, their short- and long-term purposes in life, and the ways in which spirit and body contribute to the growth (or death) of social organizations and society” (Barnett et al. 2000).

Krishnakumar and Neck (2002) asked “why is there such an increased interest in spirituality in the workplace?” They believe this is due to societal changes regarding the demise of leisure time and advancements in technology. They argue that these changes have resulted in employees “desire to experience spirituality not only in their personal lives, but also in their work”, where they spend a large amount of time in environments that have become more unfriendly (Ray 1992; Neck and Milliman 1994; Moore-Davis 2007). Sharma, (2003) believes discussions about spirituality are not complete without discussions regarding wealth and success their spiritual substitutes—that trigger similar emotional feelings and wellbeing.

3 Methodology

3.1 A Narrative Research Approach

This study builds on previous bigger research (2006–2012) undertaken to explore cultural meanings of respect. This was based on diverse cohorts of final-year undergraduate business students of multiple identities, who were recognised as future business cadre. This earlier study provided insight to these research participants’ (some of whom were leaders and entrepreneurs), spirituality and beliefs regarding self-righteousness, in the classroom and the workplace. A significant number of the participants (215) were religious faith-based spiritual believers i.e., Christians (98) Muslims (35) Hindus (31), Buddhists (24), Jewish (16), Sikhs (5), Baha’I (4), Shinto (2). While 12 were Atheists.

Nonetheless, a narrative approach was adopted for this qualitative study that refers “to research approaches or tools” (Vaismoradi et al. 2013) utilized by “researchers to design collect and analyze their data” (ibid). Narrative analysis is what Humphreys and Brown (2008) describe “as specific, coherent, creative re-descriptions of the world, authored by participants who draw on the (generally broad, multiple and heterogeneous) discursive resources locally available to them”. Organizational narratives are peoples’ accounts created based on their experience and understanding of these experiences retold in ways which maintain and objectify ‘reality’ (Humphreys and Brown 2008). As part of the sense-making process, the researcher’s role is to adequately recognize and analyze not only the meaning of the language used by the research subjects to tell their stories, but to examine the emergent polyphōnia or voice-tones that can provide insight to the significance of the experience on their well-being at work. This also relates to the voice-tones of

the organization players described by the research subjects that acknowledge the role that language plays, which Fairclough (2001), regards as “the primary medium of social control and power”. The study was interpretivist in nature, which is not always an easy task because “qualitative research often lacks transparency in relation to the analytical processes employed, which hinders the ability of the reader to critically appraise the study’s findings” Maggs-Rapport (2001a, b). This was why it was important to consider this weakness in the design of the methodology to provide clarity and to ensure that this chapter was well sign-posted so that readers can journey through the world of the research subjects to decide whether their stories are legitimate research endeavors (Koch 1998). Stories about workplace lived experiences provides insight to the overall health of an organization (Snowden 1999).

3.2 Research Design and Procedure

This study included 78 informal semi-structured research interviews that were conducted once or twice a week mainly on Friday evenings for convenience, from April 2012 to March 2015. The interview subjects chose a discrete accessible venue where it was unlikely that we would be interrupted. The duration of these interviews varied from 60 to 120 min with a median length of approximately 75 min. These research interviews, a common method used in qualitative studies, (Gill et al. 2008), related to broad open-ended leading questions that led to the identification of the nine themes or research codes;

1. Career sector roles and responsibilities
2. Feelings and emotions
3. Workplace challenges
4. Personal values
5. How workplace challenges were addressed
6. Advantages of spirituality at work
7. Disadvantages of spirituality at work
8. Perceptions and attitudes (theirs and others)
9. Importance of Spirituality at work

3.3 Case Context: The Research Subject

The subject was a suitable intersectionality candidate as she is a British born black female of Caribbean parentage of spiritual faith. The subject possesses more than 30 years work experience in a male dominated sales environment and became of faith after she joined and excelled as a leader in the sales publishing field. Her status and experience meant she could provide insight to spirituality in the workplace from an intersectionality perspective. This relates to the “relationships among multi-dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations” a tool

used by anti-racist academics and feminists for theorizing oppression and identity (McCall 2005; Nash 2008).

3.4 Data Collection: Research Methods, Instruments

3.4.1 Story-Telling

The various stories told by the research subjects regarding their work-place experiences, enabled the researcher to better understand their “acute exacerbation events beyond the biophysical” (Bailey and Tilley 2002), regarding the ‘spirit’. These narrations based on the participants accounts and how it affected them, were analyzed for coherence and for making sense of their world via creative re-descriptions, aligned to a narrative analysis approach (Humphreys and Brown 2008). Stories comes with various indices as ‘touch points’ connected to people that cause implicit or explicit awareness, emotional connection and understanding in their minds (Woodside 2010). The stories told that instigate change that in turn “spawns stories” (Brown et al. 2009), were audio-recorded and played back to the subjects for clarity to confirm accuracy and to gain their approval. This helped to achieve triangulation. However, it was necessary to recognize that stories can also “block change” (Brown et al. 2009), as well as define what constitutes change (ibid).

3.4.2 Observation

The researcher did not just listen to the stories told by the research subjects, but recognized that further supportive data could be gained from observing their non-verbal communicative behavior throughout the story-telling process. Directly observing human behavior as a research technique is one widely used in behavioral science research “considered superior to other methods” (Suen and Ary 2014). This method encompasses a broad range of practices and techniques and the observed data can be collated via the use of various tools such pencil-and-paper (Suen and Ary 2014). What is regarded as an observation is often complicated by the “frequent use of the term *observed data* to represent any empirical data, regardless of how the data was required” (Suen and Ary 2014). Moreover, “in addition to whatever genetic endowment each individual is born with, the major influence on behavior is each person’s moment-by-moment experiences as he or she goes through life” (Johnston and Pennypacker 2010).

4 Data Analysis

A narrative approach was adopted to analyze the research data to identify how Reverend Meade dealt with workplace challenges, their impact and to ascertain how she used her faith to cope. The ‘linguistic turn’ in the social sciences has been useful for “directing attention towards the preconditions for action, as well as those actions understood as speech acts” (Neumann 2002). This helped to make sense of

the narratives making evident that language is a type of social practice that comprise of social identities and interactive situations between individuals or groups of people (Humphreys and Brown 2008). The data sources were subjected to a form of thematic analysis based on how the research subjects organized their narrative structures to give account of their experiences (Humphreys and Brown 2008). This process helped to identify the emergent story-telling themes as coded categories, regarding the central characters, the plots, the incidences, actions and motivations (ibid).

Quality Assurance

Quality was a primary focus throughout this study, so the narratives were read back to the research subjects for accuracy, clarity and approval as a means for guiding the research and for developing the received wisdom (Gaskell and Bauer 2003, p. 336). Although the research subject approved the use of their real names in this study, the researcher agreed to their request to ensure that the Individuals and organizations referred to were anonymized to maintain confidentiality, which helped to win their trust. This enabled the research subject and contributors to feel relaxed to be open and honest with their responses both verbally and non-verbally as observed. Although some scientists believe observation as a method has little to contribute (Black 1996), it compliments narrative analysis that in turn helped to identify the impact of Revd Jessica Meade's workplace experiences, on her feelings emotions and perceptions. Furthermore, this helped to verify that communicative validation, thick description and triangulation were reached via "critical interpretive methodologies that show citizens how to confront the obstacles to justice that shape their daily lives" (Denzin 2012). For example, the researcher would probe for clarity and would encourage the subjects to explain what happened in detail, the impact these experiences had on them, why they believed they were restrictive and unjust and how they felt such experiences could be addressed. Moreover, triangulation is a useful tool for cross-validation "when two or more distinct methods are found to be congruent and yield comparable data" (Jick 1979). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the questions Reverend Jessica Meade was asked that give insight to the research themes. Her responses (translated verbatim) emerged naturally from her narratives, evident throughout. These stories afforded the research participants the opportunity to understand their experience, legitimize their behavior and share their emotions felt with others. Managed purposeful stories provide powerful mechanism for the disclosure of knowledge assets within organizations (Holloway and Freshwater 2007; Snowden 1999).

Table 1 Research interview themes and questions

Research interview themes	Type of questions asked
1. Career sector roles and responsibilities	What employment sector do you work in, how long have you been in the field and what were your past roles and roles and responsibilities and what do you do now?
2. Feelings and emotions	How were you affected by your workplace experiences and how did they make you feel?
3. Workplace challenges	Describe the experiences that you found challenged your faith and spiritual beliefs and explain how they manifested?
4. Personal values	What are the things that you value most in life that you regard as significant?
5. How workplace challenges were addressed	How did you respond to your workplace challenges and were you able to address them and if yes how?
6. Advantages of spirituality at work	What would you regard as advantages of maintaining your belief and respect for spirituality at work?
7. Disadvantages of spirituality at work	What were the disadvantages of being of spiritual belief at work?
8. Perceptions and attitudes	As a spiritual faith believer and leader, how were you perceived by your co-workers, what were their attitudes and how did you perceive their behavior/interaction towards and with you?
9. Importance of spirituality at work	Is it important for you to 'live' or practice your spirituality in the workplace and if so why?

5 Findings

5.1 Career Sector: Roles and Responsibilities

Reverend Meade’s first experience of sales was in the 1970s while working in a shoe shop. She then developed a “desire to sell clothes” before deciding to start her own business. This was when she discovered her “entrepreneurial prowess”, which led to her involvement in multilevel marketing where she had line-management responsibility of various sales teams. The satisfaction gained from these early experiences was the catalyst to Jessica’s full-time career in sales back in the mid-1980s.

A Leap of Faith

Shortly after joining the profession she encountered a smartly dressed well-spoken young Caucasian woman evangelizing in the street. Although Jessica was not religious she was intrigued by “the messenger” who did not reflect the Pentecostal image depicted by the kinds of street evangelists she normally came across. However, while observing this woman, she could not help wondering “why on a Friday evening was she was not in the pub drinking?” This Jessica said was a cultural norm for many employees in the area recognized as a vital part of the British way of life (House of Commons, Culture, Media and Sports Committee

2007). As Jessica approached the woman began to read her “a scripture from the bible that described murderers, thieves and liars in the same light”. This she said “made me aware of the lies that I was expected to tell in my job to ‘seal the deal’” a term used in the sales profession for persuading a client to buy. She added “this was something, I did not feel comfortable doing” nor “did I connect these lies with spirituality until shown the scripture that highlighted the consequences.” This “pricked at my conscience and made me want to know what else was written in the bible.” Jessica was raised in the Catholic faith by her St. Lucian parents, but was never encouraged to read the bible. St. Lucia is a small island located in the Caribbean that was ruled alternatively by the French and the British until the French conceded around 1814. Hence the why “the language that characterizes the *St. Lucian* people is French Creole” (Frank 1993) while “Christianity is the dominant religion” (ibid), with more than 85% of the nation being Roman Catholics. The young evangelist persuaded Jessica to enroll for bible classes where she joined other professionals “who did not compromise their Christian way of life”, which Jessica found “fascinating”. She was then assigned a disciple to guide her through her Christian journey of discovery. This culminated in her being baptized.

5.2 Feelings

The faraway look and contented smile on Jessica’s face while recalling her baptism could be described as one of tranquility and delight particularly when accompanied by the change in her voice level, which became more high-pitched. This intonation is referred to by Auer and Di Luzio (1992), “as the perceived temporal organization of predominantly pitch in speech”. Jessica then described what happened when she arrived for work the Monday morning after her Sunday baptism, “I was still filled with excitement, and was eager to share my good news with my boss the Director in the firm”. He responded by swearing—telling “me to f–k off!” Jessica brought all five digits of her right hand to a point used to prod the middle of her stomach while raising her shoulders as she widened her eyes to express how her Director’s words made her feel. She said it was like a hard body blow that made her feel “dejected and physically sick”. His response challenged her self-righteousness based on her spiritual beliefs regarding what she knows to be right that in comparison, her Director views as wrong or at least at odds with his own beliefs about spirituality (Falbo and Shepperd 1986). Jessica recalled the “look of disgust and disappointment etched on his face, which she said, really affected me!” She recalled the “high” felt when she left work the Friday before her baptism as “I had doubled my number of sales that week” a success that Sharma (2003), describes as a “spiritual substitute”. This was followed by her baptism on the Sunday hence the double high quickly followed by the “double blow” felt when her boss responded negatively and disrespectfully to her good news. Jessica said she did not want to be a hypocrite, nor “did I want to lie, which was why I decided to tell my boss about my baptism”. However, Jessica soon realised that “lying was an integral part of the organisation’s culture”. This

experience affected her morale so she became less motivated and less effective in the job suggesting that a lack of respect for employees' key values such as their spirituality, can affect their performance. Akin to her other personal identities, Revd Meade recognized that it was important for her to fulfil her spiritual identity needs in order for her to feel contented; hence the need for the integration of simplification to promote wellbeing at work.

5.3 Workplace Challenges

Jessica endured further challenges when her colleagues were informed that she had become a 'Christian'. She remembered how they sarcastically referred to her as "the Reverend". Or, "'pick-up'" on what they regarded as Christian faux pas' to ask sarcastically, "I thought you were a Christian?" She admitted that this behavior made her feel angry, but at the time she was unsure how to deal with it. Although Jessica was shocked by the way she was treated by her colleagues in that first week after her baptism, she continued to attend bible classes, but then agreed to join her colleagues for a drink in the pub that Friday. However, when she entered the building something strange happened, "it was as though a bright light had suddenly flashed before my eyes that made me reel backwards and take stock of where I was. I felt offended by being there (in the pub) so I decided to leave". She believed this experience was a spiritual message from God that enabled her to draw on her self-righteous beliefs, which was a reminder that this was something she was not prepared to compromise; to extricate herself from the situation.

5.4 Personal Values

At the time Jessica was in emotional turmoil because of how she was feeling about the two things she valued most—her faith and her career. She said there was "too much contradiction between the two, so I realized that I needed to retreat by taking time out to think" and to "talk to God confirming that like my faith, I also love my job and don't want to leave." She was seeking spiritual guidance so that she could "maintain her faith and her job without having to compromise either". This need to retreat into self-righteousness to draw on her spiritual faith was Revd Meade's way of attempting to stabilize her inner core as a means for demystifying and simplifying the intersectionality of personal identities as a black female leader of spiritual faith, and the demands and challenges that come with them.

When she returned to work, a colleague she did not notice before caught her attention. She said "as I listened to him I realized how skillful he was at selling business. For me it was like a form of art." She added that "I knew I wanted to sell like him instead of 'blagging' which is often the case in my industry". Blagging is when you try to mask uselessness, which can be detrimental if exposed (Black 2005). This colleague became Jessica's mentor before leaving to join another firm inviting her to do the same. She saw this as an opportunity to start afresh so decided

to be open about her Christianity from the onset, explaining that she did not want to do anything that would compromise her faith. Her new employers responded by saying all that matters was her ability “to put figures on the board” referring to successful sales outcomes.

5.5 The Challenges Continue

“Stand-Up the Reverend Has Entered the Room!”

Jessica confirmed that it was at this firm that she was mocked the most where “the mockery came mainly from my peers, but in this new firm it was the Sales Director who took the lead encouraging others to follow suit.” When asked how this mocking manifested, she said “they would laugh when I walked in and say sarcastically, we’d better stand up as the Reverend has entered the room!” Furthermore they asked me to work on projects they thought would challenge my faith, but her self-righteousness meant she found the confidence to ‘stand’ firmly by her spiritual beliefs. Yet, “when I refused they would accuse me of for instance, being homophobic, which was not the case.”

Not Another Tart, They Keep Sending us Tarts and They Never Make It!

Other challenges include the time when on her first day in media sales, prior to being baptized when I was walking across the sales floor. One of the men watching me shouted at the top of his voice “not another tart, they keep sending us tarts and they never make it!” She was also asked (which she believed was because she was black), whether she would try and get her “bro’s a job in the firm”, referring to black men. These comments made Jessica aware that even though she regards herself as British, the color of her skin meant she was unlikely to be accepted as British by many of her white colleagues.

Adopting an Accent in an Attempt to Mimic a Black Person

Jessica recalled the time she accused her boss of “being racist due to a comment he made”. He responded by bending backwards with arms outstretched glancing wide-eyed to the sky before adopting an accent in an attempt to mimic a black person as he asked (referring to God), “where is he?” He then beckoned with his fingers to conclude challengingly, “bring it on!” Jessica knew that her boss’s actions were not only racist, but was an attempt to mock her faith.

“I Was Once a Christian But I Am Now a Muslim!”

On one occasion her colleagues photocopied the book of John from the bible to leave on her desk. This was accompanied with an article headlined, “I was once a Christian but I am now a Muslim!” Jessica believed this was meant to ridicule her faith. She also recalled the time a colleague she accused of “being duplicitous” arrived at work the next day wearing a Tee-Shirt with the words “Jesus can’t skate” emblazoned on the front in an attempt to mock her.

5.6 Emotions

These incidences evoked negative emotions such as anger and humiliation triggered when events occur that cause concern (Frijda 1986) that can be outwardly recognized such as the pensive furrowed brow look displayed on Jessica's face. Other women suffered a similar fate such as Jessica's colleague whose image was deemed masculine who was humiliated on her first day when a male manager asked loudly when she arrived "Is it a man is it a plane? Whatever it is, I don't want it on my team!" Overt racism, sexism and spiritualism were commonplace workplace practices in this organization. Collins (1998), describes 'race', class and gender as interlocking systems of oppression. Arguably, this kind of cruelty is likely to be even greater when spirituality is added to the mix. Such discriminatory behaviors breach equality laws such as that specified in the Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk 2010).

Suffering in Silence

Employees who suffer workplace discrimination feel they have no other choice but to suffer in silence rather than risk losing their jobs. For most, work is a never-ending struggle a place where they are constantly expected to prove their worth. This instills suspicion and a need to keep watch just in case there are others around waiting to impede their efforts and accomplishments or pretend not to notice them to avoid giving them credit (McKnight 1984). Many victims of discrimination fear repercussions if they complain, opting instead for a less painful expedient option, by resigning from their positions (Wilson 2010a, b), so organizations run the risk of losing talented competent staff.

5.7 How Workplace Challenges Were Addressed

Negativity as Drivers of Success

Jessica said "being black, female and a Christian, meant my ridicule was threefold". Yet, she was determined to draw on these experiences to succeed in her male dominated industry. I am the type of person who tends to use negativity as drivers to success, she said. Furthermore, "it is utopian to conceive of a life without negative experiences" (Lopez 2008), but one way of dealing with them is to draw on positive emotions to reappraisal them so that positive states and traits can be accentuated (ibid). For Revd Meade, such positive emotions are evoked by an ability to harmonize her intersectionality born of multiple identities. This is aided by her self-righteous beliefs, that affords her inner stability and peace to cope with these and other challenges endured in today's VUCA environment beset with adversity and austerity measures. Moreover, utilizing positive emotions and a Self-Righteous approach, paid dividends for Jessica because as her "success grew the mockery began to subside". She said, "I progressed from being just a good performer to one of the top three 'players' and the only female recognized on the 'player' board displayed for all to see". Jessica attributes her success to her faith and faith

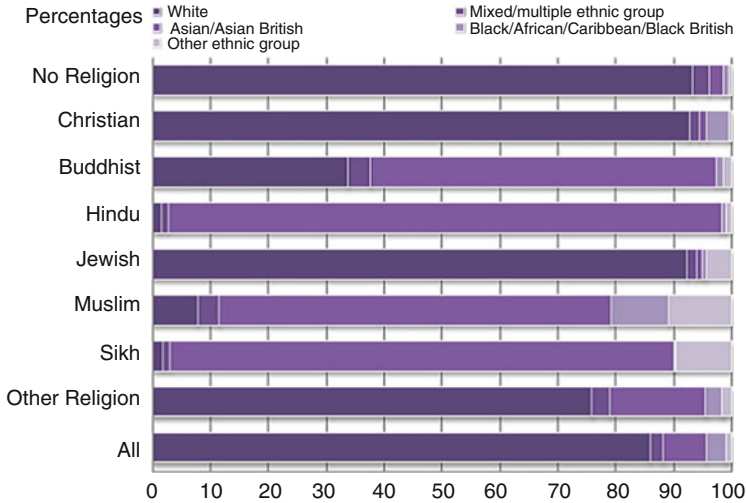


Fig. 1 Religion by ethnicity England and Wales, 2011

teachings such as, to “have a desire to achieve more than the norm”. She was later ordained as a Reverend. The Church “ordained 490 new clergy (221 women and 269 men) in 2012” (Archbishops’ Council 2016). An Office for National Statistics 2011 survey (Fig. 1) showed that those of religious beliefs from a Black, African, Caribbean or Black British background represented only 3.3 of the UK population (56,075,912).

5.8 Advantages and Disadvantages of Spirituality at Work

Jessica said “the advantages of my spirituality enabled me to overcome my workplace challenges, such as when I felt like giving up. I would read a relevant scripture from the bible such as Philopians 4:13 where it says, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”, which helped her to cope. Jessica said a workplace disadvantage was “being open about my faith” such as when she was training a new recruit prior to him being placed on the sales floor. As usual, she referred to parables regarding historical figures such as David who slay Goliath, as an example of an icon of success. The intention was to motivate new recruits to do their best. Jessica said “although I referred to other non-Christian parables, this person decided to complain about the Christian one” suggesting that for some, faith at work is still a taboo. Jessica realized that “although my sales prowess has always been respected, I have never been respected for my faith, ethnicity or for being a woman”, which affected her self-esteem and wellbeing.

Those Who Endured Similar Experiences

Joan Poorman, another leader of faith endured similar experiences. She works as a Client Manager and Senior Recruitment Consultant for a medical healthcare agency. Like Jessica, Joan is experienced in sales where she said the focus is “about making the quick ‘buck’ and using methods” of choice “to put the numbers on the board”. Joan admits that she finds this approach “challenging to my spirituality” as “one is often required to use underhand methods to make money.”

Perceptions and Attitudes

Joan said “spirituality often conjures thoughts of ‘New Age’ philosophies around belief systems and perceptions of the darker side such as the occult”, which arguably makes it difficult for employers to accept is something that could be good for business. Nonetheless, Joan said her “faith is number one priority” as “it is inextricably linked with what I do and how I do it and I have become more aware of how I am being led by the holy-spirit in my work.” This belief resonates with another faith leader, Reverend Esme Beswick MBE who said the holy-spirit is the guiding light in her work and is at the basis of her performance and success.

Importance of Spirituality at Work

Joan recalled the “times when I felt my faith was being compromised by expectations in the job that challenged my faith ethics.” When asked how she dealt with such challenges, Joan said she refused to comply. Her employers responded by taking away her “responsibilities, which at the time were quite senior”. However, they “soon realized how skilled I was at the job when they could not find anyone else good enough to replace me”. This is why she now has two job titles and dual responsibilities. Joan believes her faith “had a hand in this outcome”. She said as a believer working in an environment where being truthful to candidates who take for granted that “I will be able to find them work” is a struggle. For example “I know I can’t place those with poor language skills” so one way of coping with such scenarios is to “reconnect with my faith in prayer.” The insights gained from these spiritual life stories, demonstrates that negative perceptions of spirituality can result in negative attitudes towards those of faith in the workplace. However, positive beliefs about spirituality can be used by those of faith to foster positive workplace learning outcomes.

5.9 Analyses of Findings

Story-Telling Narratives

The participants’ stories afforded them power to shape their world and identity as their stories emerged (Holloway and Freshwater 2007). Stories begin with life situations such as arriving at work to discover that everything is fine so we expect things to continue in this way until a crisis occurs that throws this life as we know it out of balance (McKee and Fryer 2003), akin to those shared by Reverend Jessica Meade.

A good storyteller is able to describe what was going on and how they were able to deal with the forces of challenge. The mockery that Reverend Meade experienced made her realize how she was perceived as a leader of faith. These experiences invoked feelings of anger and humiliation. But as Jessica confirmed it was “my spirituality” that “enabled me to overcome my workplace challenges” as agreed by Joan Poorman, which they used as a coping strategy. Organizational stories are mechanisms for disclosing the intellectual and knowledge assets, and the organization’s rights and wrongs (Snowden 1999).

Story-telling is an important communication tool that influences organization learning and enables storytellers to supplement individual memories with institutional memory (Gabriel 2000; Vance 1991; Boje 2008). Moreover, story-tellers are able to reflect on their experiences and call on their protagonist of self to describe how they worked with a situation, made difficult decisions, took action and explain how they discovered the truth (McKee and Fryer 2003). Illustrious storytellers such as Shakespeare also endured the fundamental conflict between subjective expectation and cruel reality (ibid).

Observations

Observing the behavioral manifestations displayed by the research participants while sharing their stories of spiritual faith, made evident how they would become more expressive and animated when discussing those experiences that had the greatest impact on their confidence and wellbeing. This was mitigated with long pauses and periods of silent reflection, which further compounded the impact of these experiences. The researcher recognized that “basing evidence on direct observation and collecting it in an objective and unbiased way” are “key tenets of empirical research” (Ritchie et al. 2013, p. 9).

6 Concluding Discussions

6.1 Exploring Intersectionality and Self-Righteousness: A Coping Mechanism

Several key discussion points emerged from the literature and from the stories told by the research participants, suggesting that much can be gained from exploring inter-related intersections. Lutz et al. (2011) recognized the tendency to explore the oppressive experiences of white middle-class women, while the life of their disadvantaged black-female counterparts, were being ignored. This further supports the need to investigate the multidimensional nature and complexity of black women’s lives including their spirituality (ibid).

Intersectionality is rendered an appropriate tool to examine issues of differences, however, it is used inconsistently and is underutilized (Makkonen 2002; Jordan-Zachery 2007). Perhaps this is due to difficulties accepting its suitability for exploring the lives of disadvantaged women with multiple identities, which should be investigated from a mutually inclusive singular perspective instead of from

“mutually exclusive categories” (Crenshaw 1989). Unconscious bias can make it difficult for white feminists to accept that being black, British, female and of faith is a singular identity, although the term “*intersectionality*” denotes the experiences of women whose gender category relate to other disadvantaged social categories (Banton 2011) hence a discriminatory “*double-whammy*”.

As acknowledged earlier, the notion of self-righteousness, which Falbo and Shepperd (1986), describe as a belief that one’s behaviours or actions are correct compared to that of others; can be used as a means for simplifying and demystifying multiple identities that each have different needs. Arguably this is a necessary process for making sense of the implications of multiple identities from an intersectionality perspective. Furthermore, instead of being perceived perhaps as the kinds of mind-set adopted by religious bigots or as the standpoint of the supercilious, instead it is important to recognise that self-righteousness helps to integrate simplification that aids clarity that can promote wellbeing, an ability to cope with adversity while boosting confidence and career success, which would be good for business.

If as argued, discrimination at work is “negatively associated with various indicators of well-being” (Deitch et al. 2003), therefore to address it is likely to have the opposite positive effect. The VUCA environment that we live and operate in today, suggests that this is not just an ideology, but a must.

6.2 Growing Interest Yet Limited Written Works Exist for Teaching Spirituality

The literature makes evident that there is growing interest in spirituality in the workplace. Yet limitations still exists regarding written works that focus on teaching spirituality in management programs and in business organizations. These limitations perhaps give insight to why there is a lack of written works that examine the impact of spirituality on the careers of black British female leaders who become of faith whilst employed in male dominated environments, particularly from the perspective of self-righteousness.

The limitations in written works suggest spirituality as a topic is not one that management programs tend to consider in any great detail. Consequently, their graduates enter work with serious deficits in their understandings of the multiplicity of personal and professional values (Barnett et al. 2000), akin to those predominantly governed by the notion of self-righteousness. This poses difficulties when the need arises to gain or maintain personal respect, know how to give it, and for leaders to know how best to earn respect from an increasingly diverse workforce to avoid conflict (Wilson 2012).

6.3 Recognizing the Importance of Spiritual Beliefs to Employee Well-Being

The subjects' stories suggest that recognizing the significance of employees' self-righteousness and spiritual beliefs is crucial for them to feel respected and that negative emotions, such as anger or anxiety, emerges when people have cause for concern (Frijda 1986). Moreover, the research narratives imply a shift in purpose from one based on working to earn a living, to one focused on the need for a career-organization-life that allows spiritual expression that would have a positive impact in the corporate world (Neal et al. 1999) to flourish.

Workforces today are multifaceted, hence the need for effective diversity management to nurture inclusion and equality. This is subject to acknowledging the relevance of intersectionality particularly in today's increasingly diverse global work environments that now yields those of different cultures, ethnicities, religions and self-righteous beliefs. As recognized, "It is easy to talk about diversity and equality", words that seem to "roll smoothly off the tongue" (Pollitt 2006). Nevertheless, "to effect change" it is important to acknowledge that diversity and equality "have become more than honeyed terms" that instead needs to be "lodged in the heart and soul of any organization serious about improving the working lives of female and BME employees" of faith (ibid).

6.4 Praying to Cope with Adversity

Krause (2003) explored whether praying for others buffers the effects of financial strain on the physical health status of the person offering the prayer. What was revealed was that praying for material things fails to offset the pernicious effects of economic difficulty on health. This further suggests that praying does not make the problem disappear, but instead like self-righteousness, is a means for coping with it, which helps to manage change in the workplace.

As asserted by Pruzan (cited in Laszlo 2011), spirituality can be used as a reference point and is worth integrating into personal and organizational behavior. Furthermore, stories of spirituality in the workplace, is a means for understanding developments in the theory and practice of management that helps to provide renewed insights and greater understanding of the significance of self-righteousness and intersectionality in the workplace.

These changes show that the world of work is more complicated than one might think. Yet businesses today "fail to recognize that success is best achieved by treating the organization as a complex ecology, whose workings cannot be fully predicted" (Snowden 1999).

7 Recommendations: Theoretical and Practical Implications

Recognizing and Embracing Those of Spiritual Faith

It would be difficult to address all the recommendations in any great detail here. Nevertheless, these recommendations help to answer earlier questions confirming that it is crucial for business faculties and organizations to acknowledge that, self-righteousness based on spiritual beliefs of a higher order helps believers of all guises intersectional or otherwise, to cope with workplace challenges. Therefore, benefits can be gained from embracing those of spiritual faith to align personal and corporate vision and to incorporate its teachings in programs that acknowledge the tenets of spirituality. It was further suggested that a lack of spiritual theoretical works, is perhaps due to an inability to acknowledge its significance and organizational benefits.

The Need to Teach Spirituality in Management to Strengthen Leaders' Minds

Hopefully universities will be able to associate the teachings of management to spirituality and a higher cause that helps strengthen mindsets (Drucker 1988). After-all, "humanistic (positive) psychology and integral psychology emphasizes individual and collective strengths" (Fredrickson and Losada 2005) that "enables human goodness and resilience".

A study of African American women leaders, revealed that most of the "participants had strong spiritual beliefs" of self-righteousness, at the basis of their workplace success (Robinson 1996) suggesting the benefits that spirituality brings to the workplace.

Spiritual Well-Being and a Black Woman's Way of Surviving in the Workplace

Reverend Meade utilized her spiritual self-righteous beliefs that helped her to acknowledge her intersectionality and harmonize her multiple identities that helped to 'feed' her soul giving her the confidence and strength to cope with her workplace challenges and to enable her to achieve success in her male dominated secular surroundings. "Women's experience of working in management has been studied extensively" (Watts 2009). However, "the particular challenges they face in this role within male-dominated professions merits further attention" (ibid), hence the significance of this study.

As Dehler and Welsh (1994) advised, management needs to address the role that spirituality plays in employees' wellbeing and an organization's change process. They argued that the "concept of spirituality and self-righteousness needs to be developed as a kind of positive emotion that serves as a thread connecting the non-rational dimensions of human behavior, integral to implementing change". Furthermore, "spirituality enables a business-person to gain a more integrated perspective on their firm" (Cavanagh 1999).

Forget Political Correctness Just Adopt a Respectful Mind-Set for All!

A need to adopt a respectful mindset, which Gardner (2007) argues is necessary to respond “sympathetically and constructively to differences extending beyond mere tolerance and political correctness”. This would help to ensure that others are not inflamed by those of difference, do not ignore them, treat them as oddities or for that matter annihilate them for their beliefs (ibid). Instead employers have a moral duty of care to show respect for all their employees (Gardner 2007) in all their guises, making evident their commitment to nurture workplace justice, which Rawls (2009) describes as “the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thoughts”.

This chapter concludes with a final recommendation communicated by Rev. Jessica Meade in the message below that summarizes the significance of spirituality today.

I believe leaders need to understand how integral an individual’s faith is to their thought process and lifestyles. This has an impact on their ability to perform well and succeed in the workplace. Furthermore, spirituality is inextricably linked to a person’s perception of self and of others

Reflective Questions

1. Do you think there is less or greater acknowledgment of the relevance of spirituality in the workplace today?
2. Do you think today’s leaders would find it difficult to manage employees with multiple identities and if so why?
3. What does self-righteous mean from your cultural perspective?
4. What would employers need to do to demonstrate that they take issues of faith and intersectionality seriously?
5. Is it easier or more difficult to change traditional perceptions of those of spiritual faith?
6. What insights did you gain from this chapter?
7. Do you think the research subjects’ stories regarding their workplace experiences are rare?

References

- Archbishops’ Council. (2016). *A Christian presence in the community*. Facts and Stats.
- Ashmos, D. P., & Dichon, D. (2000). Spirituality at work: A conceptualisation measure. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 134–145.
- Auer, P., & Di Luzio, A. (Eds.). (1992). *The contextualization of language* (Vol. 22). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Baerveldt, C. (1996). New Age-religiositeit als individueel constructieproces. In *De kool en de geit in de nieuwe tijd: Wetenschappelijke reflecties op New Age* (pp. 19–31).
- Bailey, P. H., & Tilley, S. (2002). Storytelling and the interpretation of meaning in qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 38(6), 574–583.

- Banton, M. (2011). Religion, faith, and intersectionality. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(7), 1248–1253.
- Barnett, C. K., Krell, T. C., & Sendry, J. (2000). Learning to learn about spirituality: A categorical approach to introducing the topic into management courses. *Journal of Management Education*, 24(5), 562–579.
- Black, N. (1996). Why we need observational studies to evaluate the effectiveness of health care. *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, 312(7040), 1215.
- Black, M. (2005). *The insider's guide to getting a first: (Or avoiding a third)*. Great Ambrook: White Ladder Press.
- Boje, D. M. (2008). *Storytelling organizations*. London: Sage.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2011). *Leading with soul: An uncommon journey of spirit* (Vol. 381). San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Brown, A. D., Gabriel, Y., & Gherardi, S. (2009). Storytelling and change: An unfolding story. *Organization*, 16(3), 323–333.
- Burack, E. H. (1999). Spirituality in the workplace. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12(4), 280–292.
- Cavanagh, G. F. (1999). Spirituality for managers: Context and critique. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12(3), 186–199.
- Chakraborty, S. K., Kurien, V., Singh, J., Athreya, M., Maira, A., Aga, A., & Khandwalla, P. N. (2004). Management paradigms beyond profit maximization. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 29(3).
- Collins, P. H. (1998). Intersections of race, class, gender, and nation: Some implications for black family studies. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 29, 27–36.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). De-marginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 139.
- Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), 67–85.
- Dehler, G. E., & Welsh, M. A. (1994). Spirituality and organizational transformation: Implications for the new management paradigm. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 9(6), 17–26.
- Deitch, E. A., Barsky, A., Butz, R. M., Chan, S., Brief, A. P., & Bradley, J. C. (2003). Subtle yet significant: The existence and impact of everyday racial discrimination in the workplace. *Human Relations*, 56(11), 1299–1324.
- Delbecq, A. L. (1999). Christian spirituality and contemporary business leadership. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12(4), 345–354.
- Denzin, N. K. (2012). Triangulation 2.0. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 6(2), 80–88.
- Doggweiler, R. (2012). Integrative medicine in urology. In *Essential urology* (pp. 277–298). Humana Press.
- Drucker, P. (1988). Teaching the work of management. *New Management*, 6(2), 2–5.
- Equality Act. (2010). legislation.gov.uk.
- Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Falbo, T., & Shepperd, J. A. (1986). Self-righteousness: Cognitive, power, and religious characteristics. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 20(2), 145–157.
- Flanagan, K., & Jupp, P. C. (Eds.). (2007). *A sociology of spirituality*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd..
- Frank, D. B. (1993). Political, religious, and economic factors affecting language choice in St. Lucia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 1993(102), 39–56.
- Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. *American Psychologist*, 60(7), 678.
- Frijda, N. H. (1988). *The emotions: Studies in emotion and social interaction*. Paris: Edition de la.
- Fry, L. W., & Altman, Y. (2013). *Spiritual leadership in action: The CEL story achieving extraordinary results through ordinary people*. Charlotte, NC: IAP.
- Gabriel, Y. (2000). *Storytelling in organisations: Facts, fictions and fantasies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, H. (2007). *Five minds for the future*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

- Gaskell, G., & Bauer, M. W. (2003). *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook for social research*. London: Sage.
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291–295.
- Hamilton, M. (2000). An analysis of the festival for Mind-Body-Spirit, London. In *Beyond new age: Exploring alternative spirituality* (pp. 188–200).
- Hatcher, W. S. (1982). *The concept of spirituality*. Ottawa, ON: Association for Bahá'í Studies.
- Holloway, I., & Freshwater, D. (2007). Vulnerable story telling: Narrative research in nursing. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 12(6), 703–711.
- House of Commons, Culture, Media and Sports Committee. (2007). *Tourism: Eight report of session 2007–08* (Vol. 2). Oral evidence taken before Culture, Media and Sports Committee.
- Houtman, D., & Aupers, S. (2007). The spiritual turn and the decline of tradition: The spread of Post-Christian Spirituality in 14 Western Countries, 1981–2000. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 46(3), 305–320.
- Humphreys, M., & Brown, A. D. (2008). An analysis of corporate social responsibility at credit line: A narrative approach. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(3), 403–418.
- Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 602–611.
- Johnston, J. M., & Pennypacker, H. S. (2010). *Strategies and tactics of behavioral research*. New York: Routledge.
- Jordan-Zachery, J. S. (2007). Am I a black woman or a woman who is black? A few thoughts on the meaning of intersectionality. *Politics & Gender*, 3(02), 254–263.
- Karakas, F. (2010a). Spirituality and performance in organizations: A literature review. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 94(1), 89–106.
- Karakas, F. (2010b). Exploring value compasses of leaders in organizations: Introducing nine spiritual anchors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 93(1), 73–92.
- Koch, T. (1998). Story telling: Is it really research? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(6), 1182–1190.
- Krause, N. (2003). Praying for others, financial strain, and physical health status in late life. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 377–391.
- Krishnakumar, S., & Neck, C. P. (2002). The “what”, “why” and “how” of spirituality in the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 17(3), 153–164.
- Lutz, H., Vivar, M. T. H., & Supik, L. (2011). Framing intersectionality: An introduction. In *Framing intersectionality: Debates on a multi-faceted concept in gender studies* (pp. 1–22).
- Lyon, D. (2013). *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in postmodern times*. New York: Wiley.
- Lyubomirsky, F. S. (2008). In S. J. Lopez (Ed.), *Positive psychology: Exploring the best in people*. Westpoint, NY: Praeger.
- Maggs-Rapport, F. (2001a). ‘Best research practice’: In pursuit of methodological rigor. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 35(3), 373–383.
- Maggs-Rapport, F. (2001b). ‘Best research practice’: In pursuit of methodological rigour. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 35(3), 373–383.
- Makkonen, T. (2002). *Multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination: Bringing the experiences of the most marginalized to the fore*. Institute for Human Rights, Åbo Akademi University.
- McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs*, 30(3), 1771–1800.
- McKee, R., & Fryer, B. (2003). Storytelling that moves people. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(6), 51–55.
- McKnight, R. (1984). Spirituality in the workplace. In *Transforming work: A collection of organizational transformation readings* (pp. 138–153).
- Mistry, M., & Latoo, J. (2009). Uncovering the face of racism in the workplace uncovering the face of racism in the workplace. *British Journal of Medical Practitioners*, 2(2).
- Moore-Davis, F. (2007, March). *Spirituality and leadership: Can they co-exist*. Houston, TX: Chair Academy.
- Nash, J. C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review*, 89(1), 1–15.

- Neal, J. A., Lichtenstein, B. M. B., & Banner, D. (1999). Spiritual perspectives on individual, organizational and societal transformation. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12(3).
- Neck, C. P., & Milliman, J. F. (1994). Thought self-leadership: Finding spiritual fulfilment in organizational life. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 9(6), 9–16.
- Neumann, I. B. (2002). Returning practice to the linguistic turn: The case of diplomacy. *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, 31(3), 627–651.
- Office for National Statistics. (2013). *Full story: What does the census tell us about religion in 2011?* <http://www.ons.gov.uk>
- Pandey, A., & Gupta, R. K. (2008). Spirituality in management a review of contemporary and traditional thoughts and agenda for research. *Global Business Review*, 9(1), 65–83.
- Pollitt, D. (2006). *Diversity in the workforce* (Vol. 14, No. 3). Bradford: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Possamai, A. (2003). Alternative spiritualities and the cultural logic of late capitalism. *Culture and Religion*, 4(1), 31–45.
- Pruzan, P. cited in Zolnai, L. (Ed.). (2011). *Spirituality and ethics in management* (Vol. 19). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Rawls, J. (2009). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ray, M. L. (1992). The emerging new paradigm in business. *New Traditions in Business*, 25, 51.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.
- Robinson, F. (1996). African American women leaders in the community college: Where they get their strength. *Thresholds in Education*, 22(1), 49–52.
- Sass, J. S. (2000). Characterizing organizational spirituality: An organizational communication culture approach. *Communication Studies*, 51(3), 195–217.
- Schmidt-Wilk, J., Heaton, D. P., & Steingard, D. (2000). Higher education for higher consciousness: Maharishi University of Management as a model for spirituality in management education. *Journal of Management Education*, 24(5), 580–611.
- Sharma, A. (2003). A Hindu perspective on spirituality and management. In *Spiritual intelligence at work: Meaning, metaphor, and morals (research in ethical issues in organizations)* (Vol. 5, pp. 203–211). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Snowden, D. (1999). Story telling: An old skill in a new context. *Business Information Review*, 16(1), 30–37.
- Suen, H. K., & Ary, D. (2014). *Analyzing quantitative behavioral observation data*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, 15(3), 398–405.
- Vance, C. M. (1991). Formalizing storytelling in organizations: A key agenda for the design of training. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 4(3), 52–58.
- Watts, J. H. (2009). Leaders of men: Women 'managing' in construction. *Work, Employment & Society*, 23(3), 512–530.
- Western, S. (2013). *Leadership: A critical text*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Wilson, D. [cited in Roper, I., Prouska, R., & Chatrakul Na Ayudhya, U.] (2010a). Critical issues in HRM: Critical issues in equality and diversity (2) defining and challenging institution racism: Chapter 17. In *Institutional racism* (pp. 261–273). CIPD.
- Wilson, D. (2010b). What price respect—Exploring the notion of respect in a 21st century global learning environment. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 3(1), 95.
- Wilson, D. (2012). *Respect for identity' for surviving in the 21st century—A cultural perspective*. In Conference chapter presented in the Identity track at the British Academy of Management (BAM) Conference, Cardiff University, September 11–13, 2012.
- Witherspoon, N., & Taylor, D. L. (2010). Spiritual weapons: Black female principals and religio-spirituality. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 42(2), 133–158.
- Woodside, A. G. (2010). Brand-consumer storytelling theory and research: Introduction to a Psychology & Marketing special issue. *Psychology & Marketing*, 27(6), 531–540.
- Wright, A. (2000). *Spirituality and education*. Hove: Psychology Press.
- Zsolnai, L. (Ed.). (2011). *Spirituality and ethics in management* (Vol. 19). Springer Science & Business Media.

Doirean Wilson is the Diversity Lead and HR Senior Lecturer at Middlesex University Business School London, specializing in Diversity and Corporate Engagement. She is Chair of the university's Race, Religion and Beliefs Forum and former leader of the Executive MBA Program. Doirean is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce, Fellow of the European SPES Institute, Fellow of the CIPD, and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She is also Editor in Chief for Inclusivity in Practice the diversity awareness multilevel platform and Lead Editor of the Middlesex University's INSPIRE Newsletter.

Part II

Swavalamban: Self-Reliance: From Sustainability to Self Reliance

Leadership in the Midst of Transition: Reflections on Self-Reliance, Responsibility and Spirituality

Arnold Smit

1 Introduction

Since 1994, in the aftermath of its colonial and apartheid past, South Africa has faced the challenge of transitioning to a working democracy and inclusive economy. In the same period, the world itself changed rather significantly, if we take broader global future sustainability concerns and the financial crisis into account. These concerns have added to the complexities to which South Africans have had to respond. Whereas all sectors of South African society have been deeply influenced by these processes, we focus here specifically on how business leaders are dealing with this changing landscape.

This article offers theoretical reflections on leadership narratives in a transition context. A team of researchers took part in the South African leg of a global leadership survey, under the auspices of the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL), in which we sought to determine what business leaders think and do about accelerating the development of the next generation of senior leaders. The South African study focused specifically on understanding the critical leadership characteristics that will be required as the country continues with its transformation process, while at the same time striving to stay economically competitive in a global context. Secondary to the project's main focus, we were able to tap into the personal narratives of these business leaders, learning much about their attributes and attitudes as they, and their organizations, navigate this dynamic landscape of change and transition. Three aspects of their leadership stand out, namely Self-Reliance, responsibility and spirituality.

A. Smit (✉)

University of Stellenbosch Business School, P.O. Box 510, Belville 7535, South Africa
e-mail: arnold.smit@usb.ac.za

2 Transition Narratives

From a national perspective, South Africa is still making the primary transition from apartheid to a democratic society, while in the international arena the country is undertaking a secondary transition, which entails negotiating its position, role and allegiance amid the shifting power relationships of a global multipolar world. Core to the primary transition are the tasks of establishing an inclusive political democracy, a socially integrated society and a shared economy, and putting in place the necessary agreements and institutions with which to support, guide and uphold these structures. The secondary transition involves breaking down the barriers between the country and the international community and brings with it new opportunities for participation in global politics, business, sports and culture. In South Africa these two transitions are happening simultaneously.

Corporations doing business in South Africa are therefore faced with the imperative of contributing to the socioeconomic transformation of the country, while at the same time remaining competitive, profitable and sustainable in a globalized economy. This is a complex and multifaceted challenge and is described by Kriek and Nkomo (2004, p. 86) as being “ratcheted higher than elsewhere because of not one but two forces, namely a globalized business environment and local social pressures and expectations”. For business leaders this implies that transforming their organizations has to go together with fulfilling the expectation to contribute to the social development of the nation. This is simultaneously a dual challenge and a complex balancing act.

On analyzing the personal accounts of the business leaders in the research project under discussion, three types of challenges could be distinguished, namely engaging with the external context, managing organizational trade-offs, and navigating the personal journey. When looking at their *external context* from a global point of view, these business leaders seemed very concerned about economic conditions. They experienced these conditions as tough and unpredictable, combined with an increase in business competition, a proliferation of competitor types, and fast-paced technological progress. Furthermore, post-apartheid South Africa not only opened the gate for local companies to enter the global playing field, but also allowed the multinationals of the world to enter South Africa, thus creating international competition on home soil as well.

The challenge really is to gear up and to make sure we can compete on the proper level with the big multinationals who have been doing it forever and have got world-class sites all over the world. (CEO of a company in the milling and baking industry)

When focusing on South Africa itself, the scope of external challenges goes beyond economic conditions and includes political and social factors. In this context, business leaders identified economic instability in combination with labour and civil unrest, and expressed concerns about the quality of education, the lack of appropriate skills, growing unemployment, and widening inequality. In addition, there are social expectations and regulatory imperatives compelling companies to

play their part in the country's post-apartheid transformation and development agenda. It needs to be mentioned that, at the time of the research project, South Africa went through an exceptionally difficult period. It was in the aftermath of one of the most shocking moments in the country's recent past, namely when, on 14 August 2012, 34 miners were shot and 78 wounded in a stand-off with police at a platinum mine. Shortly thereafter, on 27 August, farm workers laid down tools and triggered a widespread and prolonged strike, which resulted in three fatalities and a massive human blockade of South Africa's major highway between the northern and the southern parts of the country. On 24 January 2013 two people were killed and 256 arrested in one of the country's frequent service delivery protests. These events came to symbolize the challenges of South Africa's transition as expressed so clearly in its still existing social, cultural, and economic fault lines.

And there is no way, you know, people can talk about salaries of CEOs and things like that, but in this third world war where the haves cannot just protect the money and build the walls higher and so forth, it's a massive social revolution that we're in. And the people who have been excluded simply demand more. (CEO of a financial services company)

Turning the focus from the external context to the *internal* environment of their businesses, business leaders reported that they were confronted with the challenge of having to manage a complex set of trade-offs. On the one hand, they needed to identify and implement those changes that would keep their businesses efficient, effective and competitive and, on the other, they needed to transform their organizations to represent South Africa's cultural and demographic composition and thereby play their part in undoing the injustices of the past and building a demographically inclusive and equal-opportunity society. Leading a business in this context therefore always contains trade-offs such as balancing business expansion with transformation imperatives; maintaining profitability in a socially responsible way; pursuing the best interests of both shareholders and other stakeholders; and sourcing the best talent while working at employment equity. In view of the above, it therefore should not come as a surprise that the interviews were inundated with references to change, transformation and diversity.

If you go and look at the South African environment, it brings something very unique in: you are going to drive transformation. But you need to drive transformation in a controlled environment, because, at the end of the day, if there's not an income statement to support it, you can't do transformation. And the worst thing you can do around transformation is to appoint people into roles they're not ready for, because the first thing that you do is you break that person's spirit. (CEO of a car rental company)

The narratives also provided important perspectives on the *personal* world of business leaders as they navigate this landscape of contextual and organizational change and transition. Their personal narratives speak of a journey of learning and development, as they had to lead their organizations and build the requisite human capabilities, systems efficiencies, financial sustainability, and social legitimacy. Their narratives speak of the necessity of keeping abreast of change, while staying

adaptable, flexible and responsive; and of developing tolerance for failure as a learning opportunity. Some narratives contain the personal accounts of black business leaders for whom the journey was one of escaping from poverty, embracing opportunity, and building a successful professional and leadership career, sometimes against great odds. Narratives from some white business leaders gave an account of the challenge of maintaining personal ambition in a context of affirmative action that favored the appointment of blacks. For women leaders, on the other hand, the journey entailed making progress and staying authentic in male-dominated industries and business cultures.

The reality is that we're operating in a new environment. I think that's probably why I am appointed in this position—because I'm black. Probably I am. It kind of bothers me a bit, but here are my credentials, here are my weaknesses, and we're going to work as a team. (Executive: Group Strategy)

These narratives give us a glimpse into the hearts and minds of leaders who are entrusted with navigating the personal and organizational complexities in a country in the throes of transition. We learn from these stories how uncomfortable transitions can be. However, transitions certainly also seem to present unique opportunities for new learning in the life of leaders. Transitions become crucibles of learning by dislodging old beliefs and worldviews and creating space for critical thinking and alternative behaviors. If approached with an attitude of receptiveness, as these business leaders have done, transitions can lead to imagining new possibilities, discovering mutual interdependence with others, developing new relationships, and exploring different forms of collaboration. Navigating transition leads to reflections that probe role perception, combined with the acceptance, or not, of certain responsibilities as integral to a business enterprise and the role of a leader in a given time and place.

3 Reflections

The narratives underlying this chapter offer valuable insights into how leaders think about their role in business and society; which dilemmas and decisions constantly confront them; what they do to develop those around them; and how they approach their own development. These leaders seem to believe that a proactive orientation is best. Why would that be the case? In the sections that follow, this question will be explored from three different angles, namely those of self-reliance, responsibility and spirituality.

3.1 Self-Reliance

In the narratives we found examples of CEOs doing the unexpected. There is the CEO of a financial services company who explicitly states that the company will

not provide loans to the lower end of the market, not because of risk to the company, but because of the moral disputability of making such loans accessible to poor people. In another case, there is the CEO of a mobile telephony provider who vacated the private office suite inherited from his predecessor in order to turn it into a recreation facility for employees. In another case, it certainly speaks of a remarkable independence of mind when the CEO of a provider of heavy equipment to the mining industry asks his shareholders to defer dividends until such time that sufficient investment has been made in the communities in which the company does business. It certainly sets a strong example when the CEO of a car rental company explicitly states his preference for servant leadership and then washes his own car, side by side with his employees in the same bay where the rental cars are cleaned. It speaks of an exceptional type of solidarity when a CEO of a retail company, who was recruited from abroad, commits himself wholeheartedly to the transformation agenda of his adopted country and embeds the values and processes underlying people development, social engagement and environmental sustainability in the company, as well as across all its supply chains.

Behaviors such as those mentioned above could be explained by means of what Luthans and Avolio (2003) refer to as authentic leadership. This type of leadership, they argue, is needed “where the environment is dramatically changing, where the rules that have guided how we operate no longer work, and where the best leaders will be transparent with their intentions, having a seamless link between their espoused values, actions and behaviors” (Luthans and Avolio 2003, p. 242). These authors further postulate that such leaders are guided by a set of end-values; they do what is right for their constituencies; they align their espoused values with their actions; they are cognizant of their own vulnerabilities; they lead from the front; they focus on task accomplishment as much as on people development; and they have the moral capacity to deal with decisions in the grey zones. We could say that, while these types of leaders are not driven by self-interest, they are certainly acting from a position of self-reliance, trusting their own ability to offer moral guidance through personal integrity and decision making. We find similar references to self-reliance in Bateman and Porath’s (2003, p. 123) description of transcendent behavior, which is self-determined and therefore “not driven or constrained by environmental contingencies or perceived personal limits”. Such behavior is “evidenced when people effect extraordinary change by exceeding demands, eliminating or overcoming constraints, and creating or seizing opportunities” (Bateman and Porath 2003, p. 125). In similar vein, Cameron and Winn (2012, p. 233) write about virtuousness and associate it with “flourishing and moral character, with human strength, self-control, and resilience, and with meaningful human purpose and transcendent principles”.

3.2 Responsibility

The leadership narratives also seem to point towards a particular type of orientation towards the role of business in society, one that speaks of commitments that go

across the boundaries of personal and business benefits and one that stretches beyond the critical minimum of compliance-based behaviors. What emerges here is an allegiance to deeper commitments, specifically in terms of what it means to be a stakeholder, both in a personal and corporate sense, in the transformation agenda of a country in a transition zone. As such, these narratives seem to point towards an understanding of leadership that is contextually aware, socially engaged, and committed to value creation for a broad spectrum of stakeholders. We seem, therefore, to find in these narratives a particular understanding and expression of responsibility. Maak and Pless (2006, p. 99) define “responsible leadership” as a particular type in the broader spectrum of leadership theories. They describe it as “a social-relational and ethical phenomenon, which occurs in social processes of interaction” with multiple stakeholders inside and outside the corporation. The act of leadership can therefore never be isolated, it is always contextually and socially embedded, and is therefore always interfacing with stakeholders and their interests, expectations and value systems. Some of these interfaces may be more comfortable to engage with, and the alignment around vision and values may be easier to achieve, such as in the case of employees. Others may be more challenging, such as when shareholder and investor expectations may need to be tempered or moderated for the sake of long-term business resilience and sustainability, or may even be strenuous in cases where exchanges with unions or government may expose ideologically different pathways towards a desired common future. Building further on the idea of the role of leaders in a stakeholder society, Maak and Pless (2006, p. 103) also point to the proactive role that leaders are expected to play in “building and cultivating sustainable and trustful relationships with different stakeholders inside and outside their organizations”, and in coordinating their actions in the achievement of business sustainability and legitimacy in the triple-bottom-line sense of the word. This orientation stamps leadership as a practice in service of the common good and thereby also as an ethical phenomenon. In their framework for responsible leadership, Maak and Pless (2006) propose that leaders have a task that is essentially relational. It is about weaving “a web of inclusion”, facilitating relational processes, integrating people from different cultures to work together effectively, and caring for the well-being of different constituencies and communities (Maak and Pless 2006, p. 103). In doing so, leaders become guardians of values, caring citizens, visionaries among stakeholders, servants that seek the best for others, coaches of teams, architects of inclusive cultures, storytellers and meaning enablers for the common good, and change agents for that which is value-adding and sustainable. We find similar notions in the work of other authors. Gini (2004) says that effective leadership recognizes that, in order to build and achieve community, followers must become reciprocally co-responsible in the pursuit of a common enterprise. Logsdon and Young (2005, p. 105) state that “positive ethical cultures take into account the legitimate concerns and expectations of stakeholders affected by a company’s decisions”. According to Youssef and Luthans (2005, p. 6), responsible leadership behavior has a positive dividend for employees as well, because “managers who act as role models when dealing with ethical issues, and who involve their associates in the ethical decision making process, are providing

vicarious, as well as guided mastery experiences, and thus building their employees' ethical efficacy". Focusing on positive corporate citizenship, Waddock (2005, p. 25) speaks of a journey "of foundational values, respect for stakeholders and nature, mutuality and engagement, and active involvement in working for the common good—as defined by those who share in that good, not just individual or company gain at the expense of others".

It is significant to note that the King Report on Governance for South Africa (2009) also places a high premium on the importance of leadership that is responsible, accountable, fair and transparent, and that such leadership should take care of building businesses that are sustainable, ethical, environmentally responsible and deeply mindful of the legitimate interests and expectations of stakeholders. In this regard the King Report does not stand on its own, but shares a broader interpretive framework of values and principles with the country's constitution and various other charters, codes and laws. One can therefore assume that leaders with a proactive responsibility orientation will also find guidance and a sense of intellectual and emotional resonance with the principles contained in the King Report.

3.3 Spirituality

This research project was never about spirituality as such, but, with hindsight, the notion may indeed always have been there in the minds and hearts of leaders navigating responsible pathways for their organizations and seeking what is best for society in a transition context. One of the CEOs in the study declared, "I regard my purpose in life as making a difference in the lives of others", while another emphasized the importance of "learning how not to be successful, but meaningful". There are further examples, especially those referring to life balance, family and friends, and the values inherited from parents. The question is: What underpins such signifiers of meaning and significance?

Pruzan (2011, p. 3) speaks of "an awareness that the underlying context for all purposeful organized activity is spiritual in nature and not just utilitarian via the pursuit of material gain". And so, says Pruzan (2003, p. 9), "[W]e are clearly not speaking here of traditional skills, or techniques—but matters relating to the spiritual nature of man, of organizational-existential questions dealing with organizational purpose, identity, success and responsibility, and of spirituality as the context for work."

Losoncz (2011) sees spirituality as multifaceted. For him, spirituality includes having the capability of being receptive to values; strengthening the responsibility for self; providing a strong tie between the individual and community; manifesting responsiveness; enabling transformation within the cohesion of a lifetime; operating within the spheres of social action and community; and no longer seeing oneself as an isolated individual but rather as part of a unified reality. This concurs with what one of the CEOs said "I go back to my roots, my African roots, in terms of the whole concept of Ubuntu". Referring to management specifically, Ribera and Lozano (2011) deem spirituality to be relevant because of the quality of a

manager's own humanity as a factor in motivating people, building teams and being accountable to stakeholders. The question, they say, "is not whether we can or should 'inject' spirituality into corporations but whether we can conceive the latter from a spiritual viewpoint" (Ribera and Lozano 2011, p. 190). It is in this regard then that "spirituality can also strengthen the presence of values in practices and reinforce our commitment to putting values into effect" (Ribera and Lozano 2011, p. 194).

Lázár (2011) highlights the innate spiritual character of human life and speaks of the bridge between the efficient use of resources and the inseparable spiritual connection of every person to nature and community. Sustainability, Lázár (2011, p. 97) says, "challenges economics by looking for humanity not in the material wealth, but in the inner wealth, in creative and responsible being".

Returning to the leadership narratives, with spirituality as an interpretive lens, a number of plausible observations and conclusions become possible. For the leader as *person*, spirituality may foster the ability to practice discernment, exercise ethical judgement, act with courage, and be accountable in the face of complex challenges, trade-offs and decisions. It may also be the source of vocational thinking, navigating life's personal trajectory, and maintaining work—life balance in the context of competitive external demands.

For the leader *in relationship to the organization and its stakeholders*, spirituality seems to facilitate a connectedness with others—a sense of being embedded in a common humanity—from which may flow notions such as solidarity, empathy, fairness, and justice. Spirituality, from this perspective, may infuse into a leader's commitment the willingness to embrace diversity, to see people developed to their full potential, and to create an inclusive culture in terms of race and gender. Spirituality may also inform the kind of meaning-making that commits an organization to the (hi) story of a country and its challenges, seeks the common good, and builds the requisite social capital to achieve this good in collaboration with others.

From a broader *global perspective*, spirituality may be the source of a business leader's sensitivity for sustainability concerns and responsiveness to the economic, social and ecological fault lines that put the future of the planet and all its inhabitants at risk. This may explain why there are indeed business leaders who commit the capital, technological and human capabilities of their organizations to respond and make a difference to global issues such as inequality, poverty, hunger, unemployment and education.

It seems plausible to conclude that there is indeed a link between spirituality and leadership. Spirituality may be that human capacity that informs and gives character, integrity and direction to leadership responsiveness and 'respond-ability'—particularly so because of the essential bridge that it provides between the individual and the community, and between man and nature. We can indeed follow Bouckaert (2011, p. 47), who describes spirituality as "the openness for otherness [that] is the opposite of control and manipulation". In the midst of transition, spirituality may therefore be a source of courage and wisdom for leaders in discarding what has become obsolete and embracing the unknown.

4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we analyzed the challenges that leaders face in a transition context and the resources that they draw from in navigating the complex mix of challenges and opportunities that come with it. We used South Africa as the specific context for the study, and established from the narratives of business leaders how self-reliance, responsibility and spirituality can be seen as important personal resources to draw from in such challenging times.

The chapter does not claim that these three constructs offer the only plausible explanations for the resilient behaviors that we observed in the leadership narratives. We can, however, derive from these personal accounts insights for developing support systems for those who lead organizations and societies through times of change and transition. Moreover, we can use such insights for designing development programs for a next generation of leaders who may indeed have to face a future that will be characterized by larger and more complex transitions than those that the current generation is going through. How this is to be done will be a topic for ongoing research and reflective practice.

Reflective Questions

1. This chapter deals with leadership in a transition context. Think about your own story and identify the transitions that you have experienced. What challenges and choices did you face? In what direction did your decisions go, and how do you feel about the outcomes?
2. The chapter refers to self-reliance, responsibility and spirituality as important personal resources from which leaders in transition zones can draw. In reflecting on your own experience, what resources do you draw from in challenging times? What role do values play in guiding your actions? Who are the stakeholders in your leadership journey that you care most about and why? How do you nourish your capacity for wisdom and discernment in decision making?
3. Leadership is a challenging vocation. In your relationship with other people and the environment, what do you need to do more of in order to have a positive effect?

References

- Bateman, T. S., & Porath, C. (2003). Transcendent behaviour. In K. S. Cameron, J. E. Dutton, & R. Quinn (Eds.), *Positive organisational scholarship: Foundations of a new discipline*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Bouckaert, L. (2011). Spirituality and economic democracy. In L. Zsolnai (Ed.), *Spirituality and ethics in management* (2nd ed., pp. 41–49). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Cameron, K., & Winn, B. (2012). Virtuousness in organisations. In K. S. Cameron & G. M. Spreitzer (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of positive organisational scholarship* (pp. 231–243). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Gini, A. (2004). Moral leadership and business ethics. In J. B. Ciulla (Ed.), *Ethics, the heart of leadership* (2nd ed.). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- King Report on Governance for South Africa. (2009). Johannesburg: Institute of Directors of Southern Africa.
- Kriek, D., & Nkomo, S. M. (2004). Leading transformational change: Challenges and opportunities. In T. N. A. Meyer & I. Boninelli (Eds.), *Conversations in leadership: South African perspectives* (pp. 84–106). Johannesburg: Knowledge Resources.
- Lázár, I. (2011). Spirituality and human ecosystems. In L. Zolnai (Ed.), *Spirituality and ethics in management* (Vol. 19, 2nd ed., pp. 95–105). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Logsdon, J. M., & Young, J. E. (2005). Executive influence on ethical culture: Self transcendence, differentiation and integration. In R. A. Giacalone, C. L. Jurkiewicz, & G. Dunn (Eds.), *Positive psychology in business ethics and corporate responsibility* (pp. 103–122). Greenwich CT: Information Age Publishing Inc.
- Losonczi, A. (2011). Spiritual motivation in management. In L. Zolnai (Ed.), *Spirituality in ethics and management* (Vol. 19, 2nd ed., pp. 75–94). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Luthans, F., & Avolio, B. (2003). Authentic leadership development. In K. S. Cameron, J. E. Dutton, & R. Quinn (Eds.), *Positive organisational scholarship: Foundations of a new discipline*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Maak, T., & Pless, N. M. (2006). Responsible leadership in a stakeholder society: A relational perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66, 90–115.
- Pruzan, P. (2003). Spirituality as the context for leadership. In L. Zolnai (Ed.), *Spirituality and ethics in management* (2nd ed., pp. 3–21). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Pruzan, P. (2011). Spiritual-based leadership. In L. Bouckaert & L. Zsolnai (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of spirituality and business* (pp. 287–294). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ribera, R., & Lozano, J. M. (2011). The impact of spirituality in management. In L. Zolnai (Ed.), *Spirituality and ethics in management* (Vol. 19, 2nd ed., pp. 198–201). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Waddock, S. (2005). Positive psychology of leading corporate citizenship. In R. A. Giacalone, C. L. Jurkiewicz, & G. Dunn (Eds.), *Positive psychology in business ethics and corporate responsibility* (pp. 23–45). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing Inc.
- Youssef, C. M., & Luthans, F. (2005). A positive organizational behavior approach to ethical performance. In R. A. Giacalone, C. L. Jurkiewicz, & G. Dunn (Eds.), *Positive psychology in business ethics and corporate responsibility* (pp. 1–22). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing Inc.

Arnold Smit holds an honors in philosophy and a doctorate in theology from the University of Stellenbosch. He is the Head of Social Impact and associate professor of Business in Society at the University of Stellenbosch Business School. His teaching, research and facilitation include the areas of leadership, change, governance, corporate sustainability and responsibility, and spirituality. In his early career he served as a parish minister, a leadership and organizational development consultant and a human resources executive.

Spirituality, Family, Socialization and People (Soft) Skills Development for a VUCA World

Michał A. Michalski

Evidence shows that, in many cases, character drives cognitive achievement and a variety of adult outcomes, such as employability, earning capacity and health. Numerous studies have documented that cognitive skills, usually measured by scholastic achievement tests, predict schooling, wages, and participation in crime, health and success in many facets of life. Non-cognitive skills have also proven to be predictors of the same outcomes—with roughly the same strength. Cognition and character work together to determine health and social and economic status. For example, the higher the levels of cognitive and character skills, the more likely the individual will choose and succeed in a white-collar job

J.J. Heckman

1 Introduction: Why Talk About People Skills?

In recent decades people skills—also called non-technical skills—became a highly discussed topic. Under this name we will understand such elements as communication skills, ability to work in a team and collaborate, adaptability, problem solving, critical observation and conflict resolution. Their importance is presented well in the following fragment:

Research shows that affective skills, such as the ability to work with others, to communicate effectively, to demonstrate initiative and self-direction, to solve problems, and to generally demonstrate a positive work ethic, are the skills most demanded by employers of today's entry-level employees. However, it is this same set of skills that industry and political leaders continue to claim our schools are not adequately teaching the youth of America. A gap between those affective or "soft" skills demanded by today's employers

M.A. Michalski (✉)

Adam Mickiewicz University, Szamarzewskiego Street 89, 60-568 Poznan, Poland

e-mail: mmichal@amu.edu.pl

and those skills provided by our educational institutions seems to exist. (Wilhelm et al. 2002).

It seems that people skills are the ‘resources’ which seem to be extremely important in the contemporary context often described as VUCA World which stands for ‘Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity’ and understood as main features of the reality we exist in these days. To explain this situation one can look at current picture of global economy. In our times the material resources have become relatively more available and the problem of transporting them seems to be less difficult. The same is with financial assets which ‘travel’ over borders faster than ever. When it comes to technology we also experience huge dissemination and growing access in certain areas. When it comes to people skills which we are discussing the situation is not like this. They cannot also be simply ordered or purchased, they are not easily transferred or borrowed.

One of the important aspects of people skills is that they are developed and multiplied in real and not virtual life—they are ‘organic’ and never ‘synthetic’, because they appear as a consequence of human–human interactions. It means that they are rather trained than memorized and rather imitated than invented. Similarly to knowledge, if shared they increase and do not decrease. It is also important to remember that people skills do not develop automatically and their quality depends on certain factors of normative character which will be described and discussed in this chapter.

The main thesis that will be analyzed here states that the quality of people skills depends to large extent on the spiritual factors connected with marital motivations and the quality of family life where the process of socialization takes place. Interestingly, there is a growing body of research showing that there is a connection between these factors which may seem so distant in time and space. In other words, we will try to show how performance and achievements of people working and cooperating in contemporary VUCA world to large extent depends on the quality of family environment they grew up in. In order to prove this assumption right we are going to present these multi-stages process. Below we see the general scheme (Fig. 1) which is an attempt to picture this complex set of influences and interactions.

We are going to show the research evidence concerning different phases we distinguish above in order to present that empirical data confirms the assumption we make.

The analysis undertaken in the chapter will somehow correspond with the concept of relational goods (see Gui and Stanca 2010) which offers interesting perspective for understanding how not only physical activity (e.g. manufacturing) or resources generate goods but that they are also created within relations which are of spiritual-mental character. It is useful especially in the context of helping those in management and business field—who often limit their perspective to economics and praxeology—to understand how spiritual dimension of work and cooperation between people play important role in achieving organizational effectiveness and sustainability.

Fig. 1 General scheme of inquiry



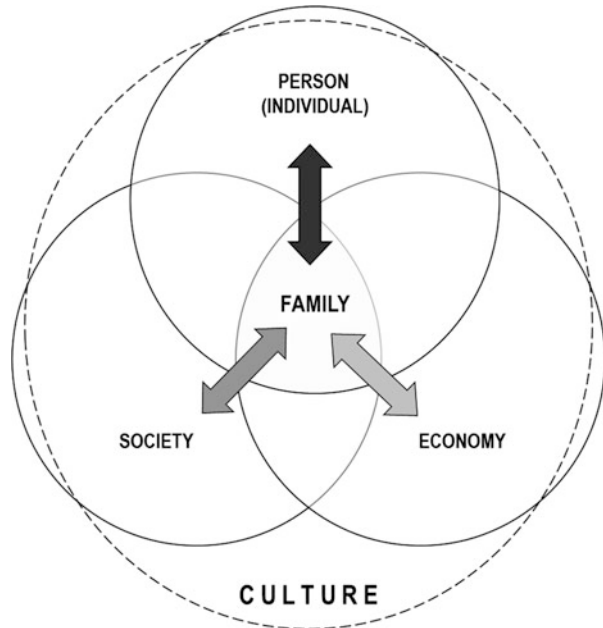
2 Method

Concerning the methodological part of this chapter we offer an attempt to investigate and reconstruct the kind of path dependence concerning the influence of spiritual (religious) attitudes and activities of parents and their marital situation on professional achievements and economic mobility of children. It is possible to large extent thanks to the growing number of research projects that supply the necessary information.

Although the chapter is not based on any original research project it aims at reviewing and collecting the data that is available within the analyzed area that may be helpful in confirming the proposed thesis.

Family in this chapter is understood according to Miroslawa Marody and Anna Giza-Poleszczuk, who propose the category of elementary family which is the smallest necessary unit which enables biological and social reproduction (see Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk 2004: 191–192). It means that it consists of mother, father and a child (or children). Such community holds the potential of ensuring the continuity of society in terms of demographic and material survival, re-creation of social structures and culture understood as norms, values, beliefs which influence the wide range of practices within a society. This point of view is supported by such authors as Robert K. Merton who described family as the “major transmission belt for the diffusion of cultural standards to the oncoming generation” (Merton 1968: 212) and Charles H. Cooley who saw family as “natural and convenient channel of social continuity” (Cooley 2005: 237). This author also stressed the role of family as the major sphere of primary (for children) and secondary (for parents) socialization.

Fig. 2 Family as mediating structure and ‘social interface’. Taken from (Michalski 2014b: 47)



In this context this group can be described—according to Giza-Poleszczuk—as a kind of social “interface” connecting individuals with macrostructures of social life (see Giza-Poleszczuk 2005: 57). It means that this mediating structure—as Peter L. Berger used to call a family—plays important role in the development of society members for performing different role within society. This function is presented in the Fig. 2.

One of the assumptions included in the chapter is the understanding of the family as institution and charismatic entity at the same time (see Michalski 2014a). The former underlines—among others—the spiritual dimension of family life. It draws attention to spiritual engagement within a family, which—according to different research projects (Kusner et al. 2014: 612)—leads to more stable and healthier marriage and family environment which may result in more effective people skills development between generations. There is also evidence that spiritual behaviors—such as prayer—increase relationship satisfaction (Fincham et al. 2008: 380) which is expected to influence not only interactions within family, but also those outside of it—e.g. in the sphere of work and management environment.

The exploration of the proposed topic includes the cultural (including spiritual) dimension of contemporary socio-economic order which seems to be important factor influencing family structure, quality and dominating methods of socialization in the context of their impact—weakening or strengthening—on the development of certain soft skills that are desired by the companies functioning in the contemporary world of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity.

Here it is necessary to mention such popular categories as ‘human’ and ‘social capital’ which are treated as more and more important factors in the context of economic performance and competitiveness. When we are going to talk about people skills in our chapter we are going to think about those capacities and characteristic which to some extent are included in those mentioned terms. In other words, since it seems impossible to distinguish clearly between the concepts of people skills and human capital or social capital the analyses presented here will correspond with these categories as well.

The analysis undertaken in the chapter will include the findings of economics of human development, sociology, psychology and cultural studies.

3 Where Do People Skills Come From?

One of the key issues in this area is the question posed above. In order to increase and reinforce the volume of people skills in our societies we need to understand how and where they are created. The evidence we have indicates quite explicitly that it takes a long way for the people skills to be found in individuals, communities and organizations of the VUCA world as well as of other époques. It is necessary to look to the findings of sociological thought where this issue is well explained by Talcott Parsons. He writes that

(...) human personality is not “born” but must be “made” through the socialization process that in the first instance families are necessary. They are “factories” which produce human personalities. But at the same time even once produced, it cannot be assumed that the human personality would remain stable in the respects which are vital to social functioning, if there were not mechanisms of stabilization which were organically integrated with the socialization process. We therefore suggest that the basic and irreducible functions of the family are two: first, the primary socialization of children so that they can truly become members of the society into which they have been born; second, the stabilization of the adult personalities of the population of the society. It is the combination of these two functional imperatives, which explains why, in the “normal” case it is both true that every adult is a member of a nuclear family and that every child must begin his process of socialization in a nuclear family (Parsons and Bales 1964: 16–17).

In this fragment we receive important explanation helpful in understanding the role that the family plays in the process of people skills development. What’s more, we learn that they are not only created there but also balanced and tempered.

In the following pages we are going to offer an overview of research data which shows how the quality of family environment influences the effects of socialization process and to some extent determines the economic achievements in later years. *Firstly* we point at the research of the influence of spirituality (religiosity) on the quality of relationships (e.g. marital happiness, family stability). *Secondly* the relationship between quality of relations, family structure and socialization—engaging the contribution of James J. Heckman—is going to be presented. *Thirdly*, the category of significant others is going to be introduced to improve understanding of the socialization process. Then we are going to show how youth’s marital and

family choices influence their socioeconomic status and finally we are going to show links between people skills and achievements.

Our line of argumentation is somehow confirmed by Mitch Pearlstein, the author of *From Family Collapse to America's Decline. The Educational, Economic and Social Costs of Family Fragmentation* who shows the connection between family fragmentation, educational weakness, economic disadvantages, loss of economic competitiveness which in the end leads to growing and very disturbing class cleavages in United States (Pearlstein 2011: XVIII). The analysis offered by him is especially valuable because it shows US as an advanced and alarming example of the transformations of the family life and their consequences for socialization, people skills and economic development. Pearlstein writes, that

The argument that follows is straightforward. Very high rates of family fragmentation in the United States are subtracting from what very large numbers of students are learning in school and holding them back in other ways. This in turn is damaging the country economically by making us less hospitable to innovation while also making millions of Americans less competitive in an increasingly demanding worldwide marketplace. All of which is leading—and can only lead—to deepening class divisions in a nation which has never viewed itself or operated in such splintered ways (Pearlstein 2011: XIII).

This disturbing reflection is one of the impulses for serious and thorough analysis of the relations that we try to investigate in this chapter. It seems to be necessary task if we expect our societies to develop and flourish in the future.

4 From Spiritual Beliefs, Through Family Life to People Skills and Achievements in VUCA World

In this section we are offering the presentation of empirical findings which make a case for the proposition we formulate here.

Spirituality and Marriage

In order to show the whole chain of interactions that are the topic of analysis here it is necessary to start from the influence of spirituality (religiosity) on the quality of marital relationships. The research done by A. Mahoney, K.I. Pargament, T. Jewell, A.B. Swank, E. Scott, E. Emery, and M. Rye shows that if spouses consider their relation to be of spiritual importance the quality of their marital life increases. These authors wrote that it helps couples to adjust more easily to marriage, decrease levels of conflict. It also results in bigger investments in their relationship and collaboration in resolving disagreements. They also report that engaging in religious activities together, holding views supporting the sanctification of marriage and accepting perspective of God's presence in their union positively influence overall marital adjustment. Such attitudes also predict greater investment in marriage, less frequent marital conflict, and greater collaboration to resolve disagreements (Mahoney et al. 1999: 321–338).

Another group of researchers offers another body of evidence for the relation we analyze here. C.G. Ellison, A.M. Burdette and W. B. Wilcox show that sharing core religious beliefs and values causes greater marital satisfaction. Their findings are consistent with number of previous studies which prove that spouses in homogenous (same-faith) couples who also attend religious services regularly experience more satisfaction in their relationship. What's more, the more often they practice regular in-home worship activities, such as prayer and scriptural study, the better the quality of their relationship is (Ellison et al. 2010: 963–975). More information about this influence is delivered by W.B. Wilcox and S. Nock who confirm that there is relationship between the frequency of spouses' church attendance and satisfaction they get from marriage. It is evident that wives who attend religious services weekly together with their husbands experience more happiness in their relation than those who do not participate weekly (Wilcox and Nock 2006: 1321–1345). It corresponds with results obtained by R.A. Call and T.B. Heaton who show that spousal engagement in religious activities (especially services) is positively linked to marital stability. They claim that spouses who attend church frequently are 2.4 times less likely to end in divorce than marriages in which neither wife nor husband attends religious services (Call and Heaton 1997: 382–392).

Spirituality, Parenthood and Family Relations

Another important link in the analyzed relationship is the influence of spirituality on the quality of relationships, including those of parents towards children. When it comes to fatherhood, the findings of R.J. Petts suggest that those who engage in religious services attendance frequently are more likely to actively care for their infant children. There is evidence of more frequent engagement in activities with 1-year-olds for fathers in urban areas who more often participate in religious services. Accordingly, reduction of frequency of religious attendance during first 12 months after their child's birth results in decrease in being actively engaged with their toddlers (Petts 2007: 1139–1161).

Another research that links fathers' religiosity to higher quality of parent-child relationships is delivered by V. King. According to her the bigger degree of religiousness among dads the better their relationships with children: it means that the expectations for positive relationships in the future grow, the efforts and engagement are bigger. It also means that emotional support and unpaid assistance are very likely to continue in the future, also towards their grandchildren (King 2003: 382–395).

Assuming that the positive influence of spirituality on the marital and parental quality is proved we can introduce data which show how the quality of family environment determines emotional and educational perspectives of children.

Some of the evidence is provided by Y. Sun who analyzed well-being of adolescents in households with no biological parents. According to this researcher, family structure influences academic achievement, emotional health and behavior of adolescents. The empirical findings show that growing up without presence of biological parent causes decrease of 24 out of 30 indicators of emotional well-being and behavior. The comparison between adolescents from families with two

biological parents and those raised without them shows that those from intact families exhibit less behavioral problems and score higher with regard to such variables as academic performance, educational aspiration, sense of self determination, and self-esteem (Sun 2003: 894–909; see Manning and Lamb 2003).

According to different study done by D.K. Ginther individuals from intact families—on average—succeeded to complete more years of schooling. More often than peers from blended or single-parent families they graduated from high school, attended and completed college (Ginther 2004: 671–696). Another evidence shows that children living in socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances, particularly single-parent homes, have more difficulties with developing people skills because they have smaller chances to receive parental attention, activities, and resources of a necessary kind (McLanahan 2004; see Usher and Kober 2012: 4).

Family Structure, Socialization and Early Childhood Development

In this section we continue the presentation of the evidence showing importance of the way the family is functioning for the development of people skills and future achievements of individuals. We are going to engage the contribution of J.J. Heckman, the Nobel Prize laureate who conducts research in economics of human development. He is the author of Heckman Equation which consists of three elements which are crucial not only for the individual development of a child, but in a long run influence the potential of the whole economy. The formula Heckman offers takes the following form:

$$\text{INVEST} + \text{DEVELOP} + \text{SUSTAIN} = \text{GAIN}$$

In this equation Heckman stresses the essential importance of investments in early childhood development which should be oriented towards reducing deficits in case of disadvantaged family environments which in the end is a means to strong economy.

According to Heckman, it is the right thing to do, because in the first years of child's life very important processes and transformations take place which influence success in school and life. He writes, that

A critical time to shape productivity is from birth to age five, when the brain develops rapidly to build the foundation of cognitive and character skills necessary for success in school, health, career and life. Early childhood education fosters cognitive skills along with attentiveness, motivation, self-control and sociability—the character skills that turn knowledge into know-how and people into productive citizens (Heckman 2012).

In this light it is reasonable to say that skills beget skills and they are the crucial factors which influence productivity and competitiveness in our VUCA world (Heckman 2008: 4). Heckman's findings offer valuable lesson and the question is if we want to learn. If we think about civilizational development and flourishing we have to remember to take care for both cognitive skills and character skills like attentiveness, patience, persistence and teamwork. Only together they drive education, career and life success in the right direction. What is also important, according

to Heckman, it is character development which seems to be the most important factor.

If this is the case, our societies should concentrate on creating the most favorable environment where cognitive and character skills can be developed. At the same time evidence offered by Heckman leaves no doubt that the quality of development we need is strongly influenced by quality of parenting which depends on the family structure. Heckman explains it:

Intact families invest greater amounts in their children than do single-parent families, although the exact reasons why are not known. These investments pay off in higher achievement.

There are large gaps in cognitive stimulation and emotional support at early ages. They persist throughout childhood and strongly influence adult outcomes. The evidence on disparities in child-rearing environments and their consequences for adult outcomes is troubling in light of the shrinking proportion of children being raised in intact families. (. . .) The problem is not just income. Even though income is the standard way to measure poverty, recent research suggests that parental income is an inadequate measure of the resources available to a child. Good parenting is more important than cash (Heckman 2011b: 33).

5 Conclusion: Family, People Skills and Achievements in VUCA

The evidence we collected proves that there is a link between factors we considered. Recent findings of Heckman based on his own and others' studies clearly suggest that people skills influence achievements in school and later life, yet their importance is often underrated (Heckman 2008: 10). The gaps among socioeconomic groups in these non-cognitive skills, including motivation, the ability to work with others, the ability to focus on tasks, self-regulation, self-esteem, and the ability to defer gratification (see Heckman 2011a; Usher and Kober 2012: 4) become one of the most disturbing maladies of our time. It is also necessary to remember that these gaps persist as children age, and as Heckman writes, "the longer society waits to intervene in the life cycle of a disadvantaged child, the more costly it is to remediate disadvantage" (Heckman 2008: 4–5).

This seems to be an urgent challenge for our governments, families and educational system to take care of the conditions that young generations grow and develop in. If we expect them to achieve—which is not only their individual but our common social issue—we should take seriously the Heckman's findings which show that "family environments during the early years and parenting are critical determinants of human development because they shape the lifetime skill base" (Heckman and Mosso 2014: 60). It is our duty to make sure that we do all we can to change the future of these children living in disadvantaged families who "(. . .) tend to have fewer opportunities at home to foster competence, encourage them to find interest or see value in learning, promote autonomous learning, or develop social relationships that support and value achievement" (Usher and Kober 2012: 5).

When it comes to necessary actions it is reasonable to say that they should embrace different organizational levels and spheres of society as well as individual engagement of its members. Concerning the business domain it seems justified to say that the evidence we collected here should call for attention of managers and leaders who search for the ways to improve the effectiveness of the teams they manage or lead. The analysis undertaken in this chapter shows that people skills, which become more and more valuable ‘asset’ these days, appear as an effect of proper work-life balance of the employees. It means that ‘VUCA-intelligent’ company respects and supports religious engagement and family life of the employees because it understands that the ongoing process of socialization that perpetually takes place between spouses and between them as parents and children may contribute to the performance of the whole company. Looking from such perspective means that it is not that only children are socialized but through performing marital and parental roles adults also develop and improve some attributes and attitudes that are useful in the context of their professional duties.

When it comes to recommendations on a societal level our findings suggest that it is necessary to promote family, religious freedom, enhance and support stability of marriages and families, because they generate important and valuable ‘assets’ which are necessary for the development of the whole society. The evidence shows that institutional or financial solutions will not suffice. We need more profound cultural transformations, and even though they take more time, they are more effective in a long run. This point of view is supported by Pearlstein, who understands well the challenges, applied remedies and results achieved in US. He states very clearly, that

Matters are entirely different, however, if intentions are bolder and more straightaway in reversing decades of family fragmentation, the scope of which in United States is unique in the industrialized world. Programmatic line items and funding streams don’t begin to cut it for a job like that, as infinitely better suited are spiritual renewals leading to fundamental cultural shifts (Pearlstein 2011: 154).

Reflective Questions

1. What do you know about people skills and their importance in the VUCA world?
2. Do you see the influence of people skills on your performance and achievements?
3. Does your experience and observation confirm the interaction between spirituality and quality of marital relations?
4. Do you agree that the quality of socialization in the family strongly determines people skills development and achievements in later life?
5. What effective strategies of improving the quality of socialization in the context of people skills do you know?

References

- Call, V. R. A., & Heaton, T. B. (1997). Religious influence on marital stability. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 36(3), 382–392.
- Cooley, C. H. (2005). *Social organization. A study of the larger mind*. New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers.
- Ellison, C. G., Burdette, A. M., & Wilcox, W. B. (2010). The couple that prays together: Race and ethnicity, religion, and relationship quality among working-age adults. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 963–975.
- Fincham, F. D., Beach, S. R. H., Lambert, N., Stillman, T., & Braithwaite, S. (2008). Spiritual behaviors and relationship satisfaction: A critical analysis of the role of prayer. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27(4), 362–388.
- Ginther, D. K. (2004). Family structure and children's educational outcomes: Blended families, stylized facts, and descriptive regressions. *Demography*, 41(4), 671–696.
- Giza-Poleszczuk, A. (2005). *Rodzina a system społeczny. Reprodukcyjność i kooperacja w perspektywie interdyscyplinarnej*. Warszawa: University of Warsaw Press.
- Gui, B., & Stanca, L. (2010). Happiness and relational goods: Well-being and interpersonal relations in the economic sphere. *International Review of Economics*, 57, 105–118.
- Heckman, J. J. (2008). Schools, skills, and synapses. *Economic Inquiry*, 46, 289–324.
- Heckman, J. J. (2011a). The American family in black and white: A post-racial strategy for improving skills to promote equality. *Daedalus, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, 140, 70–89.
- Heckman, J. J. (2011b). The economics of inequality: The value of early childhood education. *American Educator*, Spring, 31–35, 47.
- Heckman, J. J. (2012). *Invest in early childhood development: Reduce deficits, strengthen the economy*. The Heckman Equation. Last accessed March 30, 2016, from <http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/invest-early-childhood-development-reduce-deficits-strengthen-economy>
- Heckman, J. J., & Mosso, S. (2014). *The economics of human development and social mobility*. Research chapter. Last accessed April 1, 2016, from <http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/economics-human-development-and-social-mobility>
- King, V. (2003). The influence of religion on fathers' relationships with their children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(2), 382–395.
- Kusner, K. G., Mahoney, A., Pargament, K. I., & DeMaris, A. (2014). Sanctification of marriage and spiritual intimacy predicting observed marital interactions across the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 28(5), 604–614.
- Mahoney, A., Pargament, K. I., Jewell, T., Swank, A. B., Scott, E., Emery, E., & Rye, M. (1999). Marriage and the spiritual realm: The role of proximal and distal religious constructs in marital functioning. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13(3), 321–338.
- Manning, W., & Lamb, K. (2003). Adolescent well-being in cohabitating, married, and single-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65, 876–893.
- Marody, M., & Giza-Poleszczuk, A. (2004). *Przemiany wiezi społecznych. Zarys teorii zmiany społecznej*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Merton, R. K. (1968). *Social theory and social structure*. New York: The Free Press.
- Michalski, M. A. (2014a). Family life—Between charisma and institution. Signaling multidimensionality and complexity of human interactions for business institutions and society. *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, 17(4), 35–51. Stable URL http://www.annalesonline.uni.lodz.pl/archiwum/2014/2014_4_michalski_35_51.pdf
- Michalski, M. A. (2014b). *Znaczenie rodziny dla międzypokoleniowej transmisji kultury gospodarczej*. Poznan: Adam Mickiewicz University Press.
- Parsons, T., & Bales, R. F. (1964). *Family. Socialization and interaction process*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

- Pearlstein, M. (2011). *From family collapse to America's decline. The educational, economic and social costs of family fragmentation*. Lanham, MD, New York, Toronto, ON, Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Petts, R. J. (2007). Religious participation, religious affiliation, and engagement with children among fathers experiencing the birth of a new child. *Journal of Family Issues*, 28(9), 1139–1161.
- Sun, Y. (2003). The well-being of adolescents in households with no biological parents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(4), 894–909.
- Usher, A., Kober, N. (2012). What roles do parent involvement, family background, and culture play in student motivation? *Center on Education Policy*, 1–14.
- Wilcox, B. W., & Nock, S. (2006). What's love got to do with it? Equality, equity, commitment and women's marital quality. *Social Forces*, 84(3), 1321–1345.
- Wilhelm, W. J., Logan, J., Smith, S. M., & Szul, L. F. (2002). *Meeting the demand: Teaching "soft" skills*. Little Rock, AR: Delta Pi Epsilon Society.

Michał A. Michalski, Ph.D. Hab. Assistant Professor in Department of Business Ethics, Institute of Cultural Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) in Poznan, Poland. Fellow of the SPES Institute, member of EBEN (European Business Ethics Network) and PTE (Polish Economic Association). Published over thirty chapters and two books: (1) *Człowiek, kultura, praca. O kulturowym wymiarze pracy ludzkiej*. (Man, Work, Culture. On Cultural Dimension of Human Labour) 2005. (2) *Znaczenie rodziny dla międzypokoleniowej transmisji kultury gospodarczej* (The Role of Family for Intergenerational Transmission of Economic Culture) 2014. His research interests: business ethics, economic culture, family and economy, human labour, Catholic Social Thought.

Thinking Inside the Box: Applying the Theory of *Karma* to Make Boundary Judgements in Systemic Interventions

Shankar Sankaran and Gita Sankaran

1 Introduction

Even in the modern world, there are millions of people who are oppressed, disadvantaged, exploited, poor or marginalized, and are desperately looking for ways to get out of the situation they are in. For example, despite several measures being taken to eradicate poverty, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that about 795 million people of the world's total population of 7.3 billion—that is, one in nine—are suffering from chronic undernourishment.¹ They may be facing the consequences of those who are coping with the VUCA challenges in business, mainly driven by competition. A systemic perspective would include these people in the way business leaders and entrepreneurs conduct business practices and take social responsibility for their actions. Collaborating with them by dealing with boundary critique as part of action research could help them to become self-sufficient in a more sustainable way.

Participatory action research (PAR) is a process that has been used by social researchers, anthropologists and educators as a way of helping marginalized people to become self-sufficient through their own efforts or with the help of others. PAR often takes the form of a systemic intervention. When carrying out systemic interventions researchers (external or internal) are frequently required to make boundary judgements on who will be involved or consulted during the intervention. Such boundary judgements have ethical implications for an individual or a group of people engaged in the intervention. Systems thinkers have provided guidance on

¹<http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%202002.htm>

S. Sankaran (✉)

University of Technology Sydney, Eastwood, NSW, Australia

e-mail: Shankar.Sankaran@uts.edu.au

G. Sankaran

Australian Doctor Magazine, Eastwood, NSW, Australia

how to apply systems thinking approaches to deal with situations that involve boundary critiques. This chapter will look at an alternative perspective from Indian philosophy on how the concept of *karma* (right action) could be used to make decisions while dealing with boundary critiques.

The chapter is structured as follows. We start with a background to action research (AR) and PAR that will lead us to a discussion on systemic interventions and the notion of boundary critique. We will then discuss systems thinkers' recommendations on how to make judgements to address issues arising from boundary critique. Next, a review of the theory of karma from Indian philosophical traditions is presented. This is followed by some examples that show how karma has been used to deal with boundary critique in systemic interventions in India. The chapter will conclude with an evaluation of karma as a basis for making decisions while dealing with boundary critique in systemic interventions.

2 Action Research (AR)

German-American psychologist Kurt Lewin is generally credited with coining the term 'action research' when he started dealing with social issues soon after World War II. The first mention of the term is found in his work in 1946 (republished in 1948):

The research needed for social practice can best be characterized as research for social management or social engineering. It is a type of [action-research], a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action. Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice (Lewin 1948, pp. 202–203).

Even though Lewin is recognised as the social scientist who coined the term, unfortunately he did not live long enough to develop a systematic conceptualisation of AR (Argyris et al. 1987, p. 8). However, AR continued to develop through the work of dedicated social scientists, anthropologists and educational researchers and, these days, it has found a place in organizational change management. The first *Handbook of Action Research* was published in 2001 (Reason and Bradbury 2001), which collated the various forms of AR that were being used in practice. The handbook is now in its third edition. More recently, an *Encyclopaedia of Action Research* was also published (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller 2014).

A comprehensive definition of AR, as it is practised today, is provided by Reason and Bradbury (2008, p. 8):

[Action research is] a participatory process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.

Grundy (1982, p. 23) distinguishes three modes of AR: technical, practical and emancipatory. Her classification is derived from Jürgen Habermas's work on cognitive interests (Habermas 1972).

Technical AR

Technical AR is based on technical interests and the empirical-analytical sciences. According to Grundy (1987, p. 12), 'technical interest' is '*a fundamental interest in controlling the environment through rule-following action based upon empirically grounded laws*'. It 'promotes more efficient and effective practice' (Grundy 1987, p. 154). Typically, technical AR is carried out by an 'expert' or 'authority figure' to improve existing practice to become more efficient or effective. It is product-centric, resulting in tangible outcomes such as an improved administrative system. The collaboration between researcher and practitioner is largely facilitated, where the researcher has a dominant role and the practitioner a subordinate one. This approach is commonly used in consultancy work.

Practical AR

Practical AR is based on practical interests and the historical-hermeneutic sciences. Grundy (1987, p. 14) describes practical interest as '*a fundamental interest in understanding the environment through interaction based upon a consensual interpretation of meaning*'. It 'seeks to improve practice through the application of personal wisdom of participants' (Grundy 1982, p. 27). In practical AR, practitioners and researchers come together to identify potential problems, their underlying causes and possible change projects collaboratively. The project proceeds through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, with each of these activities being systematically and self-critically implemented and interrelated. This is often used by academics or researchers or by 'inside' action researchers (Coghlan and Brannick 2014) who are trying to find a way forward in their own communities or organizations.

Emancipatory AR

Emancipatory AR is based on emancipatory interests and associated with critically oriented sciences. Grundy (1987, p. 19) states that emancipatory cognitive interest is '*a fundamental interest in emancipation and empowerment to engage in autonomous action arising out of authentic, critical insights into the social construction of human society*' (Grundy 1987, p. 19). It 'promotes emancipatory praxis in the participating practitioners; that is, it promotes critical consciousness which exhibits itself in political and practical action to promote change' (Grundy 1987, p. 154). The goal of emancipatory AR is to assist participants in identifying and making explicit fundamental problems by raising their collective consciousness. Here the challenge is not so much a collaboratively defined practical problem, as the collaborative exploration of an existing social problem in order to achieve social transformation.

3 Participatory Action Research (PAR)

AR that is focused on the empowerment of the poor and oppressed (Selener 1998) is often called PAR, and it evolved from the development work carried out by sociologists and anthropologists such as Fals-Borda (1987), who sought to redress injustices found in Latin American societies through his research. Rahman (2008) traces the development of PAR to its philosophical roots in Marxism, which called for the working class to create their own history.

Based on the initiatives of an international network of researchers in the 1970s, the guiding principles of PAR were presented in 1995 by Hall (1997, p. 5):

[PAR] involves a whole range of powerless groups of people—the exploited, the poor, the oppressed, the marginal.

1. It involves the full and active participation of the community in the entire research process.
2. The subject of the research originates in the community itself and the problem is defined, analysed and solved by the community.
3. The ultimate goal is the radical transformation of social reality and the improvement of the lives of the people themselves. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community.
4. The process of participatory research can create a greater awareness of people of their own resources and mobilise them for self-reliant development.
5. It is a more scientific method of research in that the participation of the community in the research process facilitates a more accurate and authentic analysis of social reality.
6. The researcher is a committed participant and learner in the process of research, i.e. a militant rather than a detached observer.

Rahman (2008) describes the growth of PAR in South Asia, including a political movement in the late 1970s for self-determination called the *Bhoomi Sena*, or Land Army, comprised of an oppressed tribal group in Maharashtra, India. The leaders of the movement looked for guidance from friendly outsiders ‘not for telling us what we should do’ but to ‘help us think about our problems on our own’ (pp. 51–52). In fact, the group was so firm in its resolve to be autonomous that it rejected overtures from the Indian Communist Party to join it, although it considered the Party an ally in the overall struggle of the country’s oppressed. Over time, the *Bhoomi Sena* developed its own unique model for decentralised decision-making.

Pant (2014, p. 583) from Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), an organisation carrying out PAR in South Asia, states provides a more current explanation of the principles of PAR by stating that the ends of PAR include:

1. Developing and fostering a participatory model in social science field research;
2. Preferring a practical form of knowledge-in-action to an empirical form of knowledge-as-static;

3. Mobilizing local communities to have a concrete role in solving their own problems in an effective systematic manner;
4. Making development policy interventions;
5. Advocating for inclusion of local stakeholders—their experiences and forms of understanding in socio-economic theory and policy; and
6. Attempting to correct power imbalances in knowledge and information flows.

In a country like India, where the power-distance is high, power imbalances would be very difficult to overcome for people who are oppressed or taken advantage of. Pant uses a case study to explain how PAR helped to reduce the incidence of child labour in India.

Pant (2014, pp. 586–587) describes how PAR was used to address the high incidence of child labour in the manufacture of *bidis* (cheap cigarettes made of unprocessed tobacco wrapped in tobacco leaves) in the Indian village of Jamra. The strategy used was to provide informal education to the children up to Class 3 in special schools, after which they could be admitted to normal schools. The PAR project encouraged the illiterate parents of these children to form a committee to evaluate the functioning of the special schools. The parents were enabled to collect data to monitor monthly performance indicators, which were presented to government authorities and resulted in the government introducing reforms that would eliminate child labour. The ability of the community stakeholders to conduct research gave them the self-confidence to make their own decisions.

Systems researchers often use PAR as a way of carrying out systemic interventions (Sankaran 2016). However, some researchers involved in international development projects feel that classic PAR may not work in all situations, especially when power differentials are in play.

Burns (2014) argues that while many action researchers have extended the reach of AR, their work does not deal with the systemic properties of issues that exhibit vicious cycles, multi-directional causality and non-linear change. And yet, these are the types of problems systems researchers often encounter while intervening in a situation. He advocates ‘systemic AR’ to deal with these sorts of problems.

Burns (2014, p. 7) lists the following key characteristics of systemic AR:

- Focus: Action that can change the system dynamic.
- Design: Multiple inquiries connected horizontally and vertically.
- Membership: Dynamic—following the issues.
- Significance: Resonance and resonance testing.

He points out that while power relationships have to be explored in AR, engaging with power has implications on how systemic AR is conducted, which can sometimes challenge the participatory nature of AR. He states that ‘resonance allows us to determine what is important, and where the energy for change lies within the system’ (p. 12).

From the various views on how AR should be configured to render it to be systemic, it is obvious that systems researchers have to think deeply and build their

own models of systemic intervention that would be appropriate for the context of their particular projects.

4 Systemic Intervention

Midgley (2000) defines an intervention as ‘purposeful action by a human agent to create change’ (p. 113) and ‘systemic intervention as purposeful action by an agent to create change in relation to reflection on boundaries’ (p. 129). Midgley et al. (1998) propose a theory of *boundary critique*, which requires systems researchers to be aware of the boundaries they set themselves while carrying out a systemic intervention. Churchman (1970) was the first systems thinker to point out that boundary analysis is critical. While Churchman (1970) argued for ‘sweeping in’ as much information as possible to decide on the boundaries, Ulrich (1996) proposed that boundaries be set using a rationalistic approach, namely, the Critical Heuristics Systems approach, which provides a framework of questions about a program including what is (and what ought to be) its purpose and its source of legitimacy, and who are (and who ought to be) its intended beneficiaries. Midgley et al. (1998) extend the work done by Churchman (1970) and Ulrich (1996) by suggesting that there could be conflicts between groups of people who may differ in their ethical perspectives of the situation and this may result in different boundaries. They argue that sometimes it may be necessary to seek the involvement of people who are not directly affected by the intervention, but who may be able to bring useful perspectives on how to decide on the boundaries.

5 Dealing with Boundary Critique

Midgley et al. (1998) consider what could happen when a conflict arises between groups of people who are involved in making boundary judgements. There could be a gap when one group makes a decision to use a narrow boundary while another wants to extend the boundary further. This could create primary and secondary boundaries that might be resolved only when one boundary becomes dominant. They argue that when two boundaries that have ethical implications for the intervention come into conflict, they may be judged as ‘sacred’ or ‘profane’; that is, they are either ‘valued’ or ‘devalued’.

Midgley et al. (1998) explain how boundary critique was handled through creative design of methods, with a two-stage approach in which researchers made judgements about the development of housing policy for older people. The original plan was to narrow the focus of the study in stage 2 after a broader study in stage 1 but this proved problematic as they found that narrowing to find solutions would have ignored the real concerns of many stakeholders. This created a dilemma, as they had to decide whether they would adhere to the original two-stage proposal made to the sponsors of the research, or broaden the scope. A meeting with the

project's sponsors to discuss the ethical implications of narrowing the boundaries resulted in an agreement to widen the boundaries in stage 2.

Midgley et al. (1998) advise that to deal with boundary critique, a careful selection of methods at various stages is more useful to carry out the systemic intervention. They conclude from their case study that there is a 'need for creative design (rather than the selection of the whole, preexisting methods)' (p. 477) when dealing with boundary critique. Midgley (2006) argues that systemic intervention 'has the advantage of taking a pluralistic approach to the design of methods (p. 466) and 'It provided a rationale for creatively mixing methods from a variety of sources' (p. 366).

Midgley (2006) cites an intervention in public health to deal with social exclusion. In helping design services for young people living on the street, the research team included them as core participants in the research. The team was also careful not to marginalizing the participants by treating them as less rational than adults and viewing them as troubled and untrustworthy. The young people were given an opportunity to observe adults develop their ideas and then encouraged to develop their own ideas using the same methods. This allowed direct comparisons to be made from the ideas generated by the two groups.

6 The Theory of Karma

The notion of karma is basically the recognition that one's actions have future consequences for oneself (Bartley 2011, p. 2). While the layperson's understanding of karma is that of determinism and a lack of free will, it has a broader perspective in Indian philosophy, namely, that human effort can modify karma within reason, like a spark of fire that can be fanned into a flame or extinguished altogether (Radhakrishnan 1929, p. 509). This resonates with the notion of 'elbow room' in current Western philosophy (Dennett 1984), which holds that determinism does not rule out moral responsibility.

In the three Indian philosophical traditions of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism, however, the acceptance of karmic retribution, or existential angst, is virtually inseparable from the conviction that there is a way to end it (Bronkhorst 2011). In Jainism, the advice is to cease all activity in order to attain liberation from suffering, including eating, drinking, moving and, ultimately, breathing, with equanimity, which would inevitably end in death or salvation. Buddhism believed the solution lay not in the cessation of activity but in the destruction of desire. Rather than practising the immobility asceticism advocated by the Jains, the Buddha advocated the psychological solution of meditation to attain freedom (from desire and thereby suffering). The Hindus believed that it was not action per se that was the root of all suffering but ignorance.

The *Bhagavad Gita* (Lord's Song) is a concise exposition of the theory of karma in the Hindu belief system, and it states that whatever boundaries may appear to limit us, action is better than inaction (Ganguli 2008). The *Gita* forms part of the Hindu epic, *Mahabharata*, which describes the conflict between two groups of

cousins, the Pandavas and Kauravas, for the throne of the ancient Indian kingdom of Hastinapura that culminated in the battle of Kurukshetra. Faced with the prospect of waging war against his cousins and their allies, who included former teachers and friends, Arjuna, one of the Pandava princes, becomes dejected and wants to give up the fight. Krishna, who is his charioteer, and God incarnate, advises him about the need for right action, or karma.

Thus, Hinduism's solution to existential angst was detached action, that is, to do the right thing without concerning oneself with the ends. However, it was also believed that good deeds would ultimately lead to good results and bad deeds would be punished. As the *Mahabharata* puts it, "If one's *Karma* bore no fruit, then all actions would become fruitless, and relying on Destiny men would become idlers" (Ganguli 2008: Book 13, Anusana Parva, Book 13, Section VI, 18).

And yet, how exactly are karmic accounts kept? Besides, karmic retribution is believed to work for everyone at the same time (Bronkhorst 2011). This is akin to the difficulty of the theory of classic utilitarianism in Western philosophy, or the theory in normative ethics that the best moral action is the one that maximises utility, defined by Bentham (1776) as the moral axiom: 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong'.

Classic utilitarianism has been criticised for failing to take into account that an act can increase happiness for most people but still fail to maximise the net good in the world if the smaller number of people whose happiness is not increased lose much more than the greater number gains (Sinnott-Armstrong 2015).

American philosopher John Rawls (1971) offered his 'theory of justice' as an alternative to utilitarianism, in an attempt to reconcile liberty and equality. He proposed the theoretical device of the 'veil of ignorance', whereby social decisions on, for example, the practise of slavery, ought to be made without prior knowledge of one's own position in the social order; that is, as slave or slave owner, in order to ensure fairness to all.

Consequentialists tried to refine classic utilitarianism by removing its pleasure aspect (Rudolph 2011), which is similar to the *Gita's* exhortation to take the right action without thought of the fruit. Rule Consequentialism proposed that absolutely everything should be assessed by its consequences including not just acts but also rules, motives, the imposition of sanctions, etc. Among the many objections to this global consequentialism was that it would lead to paradoxes (Hooker 2015). Besides, every action has consequences that are limited by time and scope, and the thought experiment that is cited to make this point is the scenario where you have the opportunity to save Baby Hitler from drowning and assume you are taking the right moral action at the time by saving the baby, but have no control over the consequences of that act resulting in the death of millions at the hands of the adult Hitler later on (Rudolph 2011). Both consequentialism and the theory of karma acknowledge that one can only act as one *ought* to under a given set of circumstances. It is impossible to look into the future and second-guess the long-term consequences of the act.

The context in which the *Gita* is delivered shows that its central purpose is to solve the problem of life (Radhakrishnan 1929, p. 532). After a long philosophical

discourse addressing Arjuna's concerns, Krishna advises: "... always apply yourself to work, for action is better than inaction" (Ganguli 1883–1896: Book 6, Bhishma Parva, Section XXVII, 59).

Mahatma Gandhi's role in the Indian independence movement, which can be considered a systemic intervention, is a prime example of the success of this karmic way of thinking (Majmudar 2014).

7 Examples of Systems Interventions

7.1 Gandhi and the Indian Independence Movement

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's leadership of India's struggle for freedom from British rule is a classic example of a systemic intervention in a complex situation that involved an acute sensitivity to boundary critique. Besides, although his aim was not academic research, Gandhi conducted his campaign as a series of 'experiments' as he called them, learning from each to fine-tune the next (Gandhi 1957).

From the outset, Gandhi rejected the option of whipping up hatred against the British, declaring, in his famous 'Quit India' speech, 'Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism' (Gandhi 1942). Hence, he faced the seemingly insuperable problem of uniting the heterogeneous and divided people of India, and getting them to embrace his idea of *Satyagraha*, or non-violent resistance, against a powerful force.

Gandhi was aware that while most Indians wanted to be free of British rule, they were themselves divided by religion, language, caste and socio-economic status. His aim was to include all the stakeholders in the struggle, including the most marginalized who were entirely outside the social order and whose occupation involved the most unpleasant tasks such as cleaning human excrement. Labelled at the time as the 'Untouchables', Gandhi started calling them 'Harijans' (children of God). While this euphemism is now deemed condescending, and the preferred term is Dalit (oppressed), it had a huge impact during the independence movement. Gandhi also made use of the multiple methods advocated by Midgley (2006) to achieve his aim. Apart from personally setting an example by engaging in such cleaning work, and persuading his family and followers to do likewise (Bandopadhyaya 1964), he created three publications named *Harijan* in English, Gujarati and Hindi, respectively, to spread the word.

In yet another strategy for inclusion, Gandhi popularized a version of a Hindu hymn, which incorporated a *mélange* of terms to describe god from the different religions (Misra 2004), and included readings from the *Koran* in his prayer meetings. Moreover, his *Satyagraha* involved a variety of methods, such as deputations, lobbying, strikes, demonstrations, picketing, bonfires of documents or clothing, public speeches, marches, boycotts and illegal crossing of borders (Panter-Brick 2009, p. 56).

He was also cognizant of the power of symbolism and is on record as saying (in the context of his earlier political activities in South Africa):

What was needed was a 'common word' over which the question of Hindu or Muslim will not arise (as cited in Misra 2004, 96).

Aware of the *Gita's* influence in India, Gandhi decided to enlist it on behalf of his ideal of non-violent resistance (Gandhi 2007, pp. 280–281). He argued that the battlefield setting of the *Gita* was allegorical, not historical. The chariot is the human body, Arjuna the human mind, Krishna the human conscience, and the battle itself represents one's daily struggle against meanness and not a bloody battle against external enemies. The *Gita* is thus obviously a treatise on ethics. For whatever boundaries that may appear to limit us, the *Gita* exhorts us that action is better than inaction. The whole of the *Gita* would be pointless, were it not for prompting the dejected Arjuna to act.

As one of his measures of non-violent resistance, Gandhi began promoting the use of *khadi* (hand-spun and hand-woven cloth) in the 1920s. At the time, Britain was importing raw cotton from India at cheap prices, turning it into machine-made cloth, which was exported back to India and sold at hefty prices. Khadi became an integral part of the *swadeshi* movement, or Indian nationalism (Joshi 2002).

In a country where manual labour was looked down upon, Gandhi urged everyone to spin yarn for at least an hour a day as a patriotic duty and in solidarity with the poor. Thus, his aim was not merely political, but also economic, cultural and social revolution, and khadi became more than just a piece of cloth but a way of life. Gandhi referred to it as 'sacred cloth' (Gandhi 1921). When people complained about the cost of khadi, he started wearing just a *dhoti*, or loincloth, to show you should 'cut your coat according to your cloth'.

The image of the emaciated, almost naked, and obviously non-violent Gandhi hard at work at his spinning wheel had an electric effect on millions in India and across the world, and he was given the sobriquet 'Mahatma' (great soul). He was hailed as the father of Indian independence and the image of the spinning wheel was used in an early version of the flag of independent India (Brown and Fee 2008).

Then, in 1930, Gandhi had another brainwave: the Salt March. This had echoes of the Boston Tea Party in 1773, which was also a protest against what was perceived as an unfair tax, this time on tea by Britain on its American colonies and which escalated into the American Revolution and ultimately resulted in the independence of the United States from Britain. Indians had to pay a government tax on salt, which seemed even more unjust, as it was more than the cost of harvesting this freely available commodity from the sea. All were hurt by the salt tax, so everyone would want to defy it. Besides, salt was a powerful symbol, featuring in proverbs, the scriptures and everyday speech. The defiance would provide striking scenes, exert maximum pressure with minimum risk and it would be hard for the British to crush: how could they police the entire coastline? (Gandhi 2007, p. 305).

Starting on 12 March, Gandhi walked at the head of his non-violent army for a period of 24 days from the city of Ahmedabad to the coastal village of Dandi, a distance of 388 km, where he collected his symbolic lump of salt on 6 April. In the days and weeks that followed, hundreds of thousands of people followed suit (Gandhi 2007, p. 314).

When he was eventually arrested, Gandhi simply undertook a fast in prison as yet another non-violent form of protest. However, because of the worldwide adverse publicity, the British eventually released Gandhi and negotiated with him for the release of more than 60,000 political supporters in exchange for the suspension of civil disobedience (Brown and Fee 2008).

Gandhi's non-violent resistance did eventually result in India's independence but he was himself assassinated soon after by Nathuram Godse, also an Indian nationalist, who blamed Gandhi for the Partition of India (and the formation of Pakistan)—true to the theory of karma, which calls for the right action but does not guarantee what the consequences of that action will be for the actor.

7.2 Slavery and Bonded Labour Program

An example of a systemic intervention in modern India is the Slavery and Bonded Labour program (2015–2018) (Burns and Worsley 2015). This 3-year program is working with 18 local non-government organisations (NGOs) to combat slavery. The work includes the collection and analysis of life stories in 60 Indian villages, followed by an AR process and the creation of a learning architecture to support the NGOs to respond effectively to emerging issues.

Burns and Worsley (2015) point out that most development interventions are based on defining problems in terms of deficits, often leading to the implementation of inappropriate white elephants. Participatory systemic inquiry, on the other hand, does not rely on assumptions of 'what isn't' but tries to establish 'what is' the case (pp. 65–66).

One of the strongest critiques of participatory processes is that even when they work well, they only involve the 'usual suspects' such as tribal leaders or male heads of household. In this project, the researchers supported community-based organisations (CBOs) to collect the data as they had the local knowledge that would allow them to do it in a politically sensitive way (Burns and Worsley 2015, pp. 163–166).

The CBOs ended up with 350 life stories. The researchers then got them to analyse these stories in order to determine the most important factors about each one. Next, they had them map the factors they had identified and the relationships between them. An example of a simple cause-and-effect relationship might be something like this:

Family is in debt as a result of payments for medical treatment—family offered money from middle man for boys over 12—boy taken to tea shop—boy works 16 hours each day—

boy gets ill—boy requires medical treatment—new loan required—another child has to be sent to the city to pay the debt (Burns and Worsley 2015, p. 76).

The boundaries of Burns and Worsley's systemic inquiry included the fact that marginalised people were more concerned about 'how' development was done rather than 'what' was done. However, the funders of the project were not happy with this feedback. They wanted the researchers to focus on 'priority issues', when the research actually showed that, for the poor, health, education, income and security, were more interconnected than for the well off. Moreover, the participants were saying that it was not the *availability* of services that was the issue but *access* to them because of power, local social norms, institutional discrimination, etc. This required a focus on process, behaviours and attitudes, and not on 'what' was delivered. The researchers persevered in their efforts, however, and were able to demonstrate that as long as the research itself has integrity, it is possible to stand up to even the political positions of the funders.

Burns and Worsley (2015) conclude that in complex systems mediated by power consensus is often unattainable. Here they echo the karma theory of the *Gita*: 'In this conceptualization of participation, agreement is signalled by engagement not by vote' (p. 169). They add that people act on the things that make sense to them: 'Participation for social change is ultimately about movement and movement building' (pp. 170–171).

7.3 'Karmayogi' Sreedharan: Transforming Indian Transportation

While karma is useful for systemic interventions to empower marginalised communities, it can also be applied for management interventions in VUCA projects. A prime example of this is Elattuvalapil Sreedharan's interventions in the public transport projects in India. He successfully completed several major projects such as the Konkan Railway line (1990–1998) and Delhi Metro (1998–2011), on time and within budget. While megaprojects are notorious for exceeding time and budget and falling short of promised benefits (Flyvbjerg 2014), Shreedharan used innovative approaches to ensure that this was not the case with the projects he was entrusted with. What is even more impressive is that his biggest achievements came well after his retirement as board member from the Indian Railways at the age of 65, and after more than four decades of public service. Among his many honours, Sreedharan has been named *Time* magazine's Asian Hero and was awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur by France in 2005. In India he is recognised as a true *karmayogi* (selfless actor) (Ashokan 2015).

In all the multimillion-dollar megaprojects he headed, Sreedharan had to deal with many challenges and vested interests, including several competing state governments with different political ideologies, the central government as well as private partner organisations. And yet he was able to maintain his personal

integrity, work with all the stakeholders, as well as look out for the most marginalised on whom these projects would have the greatest impact.

His *modus operandi* was always to work on his own terms. He negotiated the autonomy to create each special purpose vehicle with the appropriate organizational culture and systems (Gupta and Ramesh 2010). The critical organizational interventions he introduced include:

1. Fast-track decision-making that discouraged paperwork.
2. Delegation of power.
3. Accountability that went with the power.
4. Redefined role for the finance department so it did not hold up the works.
5. Hands-on management style and leading from the front.
6. Not letting a fear of audits cramp executive work.
7. No political or bureaucratic interference tolerated.
8. Lean and flexible organizational structure with handpicked executives who had a track record for personal integrity (Gupta and Ramesh 2010, p. 36).

Sreedharan, like Gandhi, turned to the *Gita* for his professional and personal inspiration. He believed that the *Gita* has value for everyone, not just Hindus, and his standard gift to his senior executives was a copy of the *Gita*. His personal motto, displayed prominently in his office was:

Karyam karomi, Na kinchit aham karomi

(I perform the deed. But I am not the one who does it.) (Ashokan 2015, pp. 10–15).

His ethics and concern for the poor won him the admiration of his staff, the media and the masses, cutting through the endemic red tape and corruption in the country. He resisted all attempts by the private sector to woo him, led a simple lifestyle and gave away much of his personal income to the poor. His dedication, transparency and personal integrity won him the support of the media and the people—even when there were workplace accidents with fatalities—when bureaucrats, politicians and big business tried to subvert his authority for their own ends. His definition of success was not just about completing a project on time, but completing it with integrity.

One of the management techniques Sreedharan used was to have ‘reverse clocks’ in every office space and project site to remind his staff of the value of every passing minute. And yet, he himself never worked more than a standard 8-h day, never took work home and discouraged colleagues from calling him unless it was an emergency—thus proving that it is possible to achieve a lot in the standard work day provided one was focused and worked hard.

Another strategy was effective communication and delegation. He handpicked the best people for the job, paid them top dollar, then trusted them to make the right decisions, and make them quickly. He held regular weekly and monthly staff meetings but with no minute taking or time wasting. Contractors and the media were kept in the loop and the contractors were treated as equal partners, paid some of

their dues in advance and the rest promptly on completion of the job. Around 85% of payments were made within 24 h, no questions asked, and the rest within a week after the bills were scrutinised. This ensured their commitment to the project and kept them honest (Ramnath 2012).

Finally, Sreedharan did not leave the task of land acquisition for the projects to government officials but negotiated directly with those affected, thus ensuring that they got a fair deal in terms of compensation and relocation. This pre-empted lawsuits and saved a lot of time and anguish. He also addressed environmental concerns by planting ten trees for every one that had to be uprooted (Ashokan 2015).

For Sreedharan, there was more to a metro project than engineering excellence, effective project management and use of the latest technology. It was about serving the people and saving lives. He showed that if even just 10% of the road traffic moved to the Kochi Metro, 20 lives would be saved annually, and 100 serious injuries avoided. Finishing the project fast was a social responsibility as well, for each day's delay would result in a loss of Rs.50 lakhs (665,000€). For him, it was simply the right thing to do (Ramnath 2012). Sreedharan's commitment to his job meant that he was prepared to work anywhere and, in fact, in the first 15 years of his career, he was transferred 25 times and moved without protest to a new place with his wife and children in tow. But he was equally prepared to quit his job if he felt he was being coerced into a line of action that he couldn't in all conscience agree with. This moral conviction and detachment gave him the courage to always do what he believed was right.

8 Conclusions

We started this chapter by explaining how action research and participatory action research have been used in addressing social issues in which the victims themselves played an important role collaboratively with researchers or practitioners to find a way to address these issues and take control of the situation by finding a sustainable solution to their problems. We also covered the work of systems researchers engaged in systemic interventions such as Midgley (2006) and Burns and Worsley (2015), who have suggested ways in which action research can be enhanced to support the alleviation of social and community issues. We then discussed the concept of karma in Indian philosophy and provided examples of how a karmic way of thinking can aid in systemic interventions using two examples from India—one on the work of Gandhi and his followers to gain Indian independence and more recent work being carried out by Burns and his colleagues in dealing with the problem of bonded labour.

What we are suggesting is that the principle of karma can be applied to supplement the excellent work carried out by dedicated participatory action researchers and systems researchers by helping individuals and groups to make appropriate decisions while dealing with boundary critique during systemic interventions. We suggest using the karmic way of dealing with issues to ensure

that action is taken when needed while taking utmost care to deal with boundary issues in a systematic way. The philosophy of karma on its own will not be sufficient to devise systemic interventions but its principles can assist in engaging in critical reflection to carry out such interventions in complex social problems. What karma can do is to close the ‘knowing-doing gap’ by turning knowledge into action (Pfeffer and Sutton 2000).

Reflective Questions

1. In what ways is a systemic intervention different from other change programs that are implemented in organizations or communities?
2. Why does boundary critique pose an ethical problem during a systemic intervention? Is this also relevant to managers who introduce an organizational change?
3. How does karma theory help to make decisions when faced with a VUCA challenge in business?
4. How can managers use philosophical theories to guide their actions to deal with problems in a VUCA world?
5. What roles do personal ethics and business ethics play in carrying out interventions in organizations or communities?

References

- Argyris, C., Putnam, R., & Smith, D. (1987). *Action science: Concepts, methods, and skills for research and intervention*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ashokan, M. S. (2015). *Karmayogi: A biography of E. Sreedharan*. New Delhi: Thomson Press India.
- Bandopadhyaya, A. (1964). *Scavenger, Bahuroopi Gandhi*. G.R. Bhatkal, Popular Prakashan, Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal and Gandhi Research Foundation. <http://www.mkgandhi.org/bahurupi/chap06.htm>
- Bartley, C. (2011). *An introduction to Indian philosophy*. London: Continuum Books.
- Bentham, J. (1776). *A fragment on government*. http://www.constitution.org/jb/frag_gov.htm
- Bronkhorst, J. (2011). *Karma*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- Brown, T. M., & Fee, E. (2008). Spinning for India’s independence. *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(1), 39.
- Burns. (2014). Systemic action research: Changing system dynamics to support sustainable change. *Action Research*, 12(1), 3–18. doi:10.1177/1476750313513910.
- Burns, D., & Worsley, S. (2015). *Navigating complexity in international development: Facilitating sustainable change at scale*. Warwickshire: Practical Action Publishing.
- Churchman, C. W. (1970). Operations research as a profession. *Management Science*, 17, B37–B53.
- Coghlan, D., & Brannick, T. (2014). *Doing research in your own organization*. London: Sage.
- Coghlan, D., & Brydon-Miller, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Encyclopaedia of action research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Dennett, D. C. (1984). *Elbow room: The varieties of free will worth wanting*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Fals-Borda, O. (1987). The application of participatory research in Latin America. *International Sociology*, 2(4), 329–347.

- Flyvbjerg, B. (2014). What you should know about megaprojects and why: An overview. *Project Management Journal*, 45(2), 6–19.
- Gandhi, M. K. (1921). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Electronic Book). Publications Division Government of India [1999, 98 volumes, 23(14), xx–xx].
- Gandhi, M. K. (1942). 'Quit India' speech. <http://www.mk Gandhi.org/speeches/qui.htm>
- Gandhi, M. K. (1957). *An autobiography: The story of my experiments with truth* (Translated from the original in Gujarati by M. H. Desai). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Gandhi, R. (2007). *Gandhi: The man, his people and the empire*. London: Haus Publishing.
- Ganguli K. M. tr. (2008/1883-96). *The Mahabharata*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.
- Grundy, S. (1982). Three modes of action research. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 2(3), 23–34.
- Grundy, S. (1987). *Curriculum: Product or praxis*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Gupta, A. K., & Ramesh, G. (2010). Project management control system of infrastructure SPVs: DMRC—A case study. In G. Ramesh, V. Nagadevara, G. Naik, & A. B. Suraj (Eds.), *Public-private partnerships*. New York: Routledge.
- Habermas, J. (1972). *Knowledge and human interests* (2nd ed.). London: Heinemann.
- Hall, B. (1997). *Looking back, looking forward: Reflections on the origins of the international participatory action research network, in Toronto, Canada*. In Chapter presented at the Midwest Research to Practice Conference in Adult Continuing Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, October 15–17.
- Hooker, B. (2015). *Rule consequentialism*. *Stanford encyclopaedia of philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism-rule/>
- Joshi, D. (2002). *Gandhiji on Khadi*. Mumbai: Gandhi Book Centre. <http://www.mk Gandhi.org>
- Lewin, K. (1948). Action research and minority problems (republished). In G. W. Lewin (Ed.), *Resolving social conflicts: Selected chapters on group dynamics* (pp. 201–216). New York: Harper & Row.
- Majmudar, U. (2014). *Mahatma Gandhi and the Bhagavad Gita*. American Vedantist. <http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/mahatma-gandhi-and-the-bhagavad-gita/>
- Midgley, G. (2000). *Systemic intervention: Philosophy, methodology, and practice*. New York: Springer.
- Midgley, G. (2006). Systemic intervention for public health. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96(3), 466–472.
- Midgley, G., Munlo, I., & Brown, M. (1998). The theory and practice of boundary critique: Developing housing services for older people. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 49(5), 467–478.
- Midgley, et al. (2007). Practitioner identity in systemic intervention: Reflections on the promotion of environmental health through Maori community development. *Systemic Research and Behavioural Science*, 24, 233–247.
- Misra, A. (2004). *Identity and religion: Foundations of Anti-Islamism In India*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Pant, M. (2014). Participatory action research. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of action research* (Vol. 2). London: Sage.
- Panter-Brick, S. (2009). Gandhiji's dream of Hindu-Muslim Unity and its two Offshoots in the Middle East. *Durham Anthropology Journal*, 16, 54–66.
- Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. I. (2000). *The knowing-doing gap: How smart companies turn knowledge into action*. Boston, MA: HBS Press.
- Radhakrishnan, S. (1929). *Indian philosophy* (Vol. 1). London: Allen & Unwin.
- Rahman, M. A. (2008). Some trends in the praxis of participatory action research. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of action research: Participatory inquiry and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 49–62). London: Sage.
- Ramath, N. S. (2012). *E Sreedharan: More than the metro man*. Forbes India Magazine. <http://forbesindia.com/article/leadership-award-2012/e-sreedharan-more-than-the-metro-man/33847/1>

- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (Eds.). (2001). *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry & practice*. London: Sage.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2008). Introduction. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of action research* (pp. 1–10). London: Sage.
- Rudolph, J. (2011). Consequences and limits: A critique of consequentialism. *Macalester Journal of Philosophy*, 17(1), Article 12. <http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/phil/vol17/iss1/12>
- Sankaran, S. (2016). Taking action during systems research. In M. Edson, P. Henning & S. Sankaran (Eds.) *A guide to systems research—Philosophy, processes and practice*. Australia: Springer (forthcoming).
- Selener, D. S. (1998). *Participatory action research and social change*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Participatory Action Research Network.
- Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2015). *Consequentialism*. *Stanford encyclopaedia of philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/>
- Ulrich, W. (1996). *Primer to critical systems heuristics for action researchers*. Hull: Centre for Systems Studies.

Shankar Sankaran Ph.D. is a Professor of Organizational Project Management at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia. His re-search interests are in systems thinking and action research. He has recently edited a book being published by Springer on Systems Research to guide researchers in which he has written a chapter on Taking Action that includes various ways of in which systemic interventions are carried out.

Gita Sankaran has a Ph.D. in knowledge management and an M.Phil. in philosophy. She works as deputy chief content producer for Australian Doctor Magazine which is a weekly medical news publication for Australian general practitioners.

Rediscovering Transcendence Behind VUCA and Technology

The Views of Jaspers, Sloterdijk and Heidegger

Hendrik Opdebeeck

1 Introduction

If we want to manage VUCA in an integrative self-managed way, self-reliance is important in order to cope with the challenges of VUCA. In this chapter we want to examine how the insights of thinkers like K. Jaspers, P. Sloterdijk and M. Heidegger could be applied. We elucidate some crucial dimensions of what in this process is essential for an individual customer. VUCA as an acronym for volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in our world is used in very different contexts. In the army, where the VUCA concept came up, and in management, but also in education and the non-profit sector. Think of the boom in publications like Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee's *The Second Machine Age. Work, Progress and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies* (2011). In this book the impact of VUCA-inspired internet technology on management is discussed. Also a philosopher like Martha Nussbaum in her *Not for Profit* (Princeton University Press, 2010) reveals the unilateral, negative impact on education and the school system of a market system that is overly oriented towards VUCA. It is striking how the four elements of VUCA not only are deeply connected in the technological background of the army but of all the contexts where today VUCA is implemented. Volatility is expressed in the need for technological change and speed. Uncertainty as a lack of predictability is a central concern of technology. Complexity surrounding an institution is a constant technological challenge. Ambiguity characterizes the typical context of technology.

More and more society begins to understand that the VUCA characteristics as present in technology are having a great impact on sectors like management and education. To prevent organizations from losing human-oriented flexibility, entrepreneurial spirit and real social effectiveness, the technology development

H. Opdebeeck (✉)

Center for Ethics, University of Antwerp, Prinsstraat 13, D-427, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium
e-mail: hendrik.opdebeeck@uantwerpen.be

behind VUCA is put into question. Moreover, techno-philosophical reflection reveals the insight that there is a serious risk that the presence of the VUCA characteristics in technology may lead to a fading away of the transcendental or spiritual dimension. It is this dimension that more than ever seems to be essential when as a reaction against VUCA, managers want to simplify their business processes and relationships for the wellbeing of the common good.

What's wrong with our VUCA based technological development when employees feel alienated in their workplaces, experiencing a lack of meaning or spirit? In which way can we rediscover virtues like simplicity, frugality, empathy and interconnectedness? These questions are central to this chapter in which techno-philosophical literature, especially Peter-Paul Verbeek's *What Things Do* (2005, chapters 2 and 3), was the basis for the research.

2 The Historical Context in Brief

For the oldest Greek philosophers like Heraclitus or Democritus, technique or technè developed as an imitation of nature (physics). Watching spiders weaving their cobweb for instance inspired the development of the weaving technique. Aristotle (Physics II.8, 199a15) concurred with this but argued that technology could develop beyond nature and realizes that what nature cannot. But, what about the feasibility of Socrates's plea for frugality, when crossing the borders of nature by technology? We risk being still in the euphoria of Francis Bacon, who after the Middle Ages acclaimed technology as a tool to expand the power of man over nature. Therefore Marx's analysis of technology as a determining factor in the outbreak of our economic modernity becomes relevant again. Indeed it was the reversal of the technology hierarchy that Marx explained that highlighted the determining instead of the merely mediating or instrumental factor of technology (Van Bladel 1980). The fact is that until the middle Ages, it was roughly ethics that from the perspective of a particular metaphysics and spirituality guided politics and culture. Politics then guided the economy which indicated which kind of technology at that time was needed. Science joined this process. As said, since modernity we have a reversal of this hierarchy. Together with science, technology determines the economy. In its turn the economy determines politics and culture. This process puts ethics and spirituality in a vacuum, or transform them into a copy of the utility thinking behind technology and the economy. Think of the core of Brynjolfsson's and Nussbaum's analysis of our management and school system that are determined by VUCA.

It is remarkable how after Marx almost all philosophers of technology emphasized the decisive role of technology in society, whether it be for instance Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger or Peter Sloterdijk. Since the end of the twentieth century, however, we see the emergence of a techno-philosophical paradigm that in opposition to the mentioned philosophers articulates the mediating or neutral role instead of the decisive role of technology (Bostrom, 2005). Here we can think of philosophers like the Dutch Peter-Paul Verbeek as well as Albert Borgman, Don Ihde and Bruno

Table 1 Classical philosophers of technology and VUCA

	Jaspers	Sloterdijk	Heidegger
Volatility	Continuous technological development	The speed of telecommunication channels	Destruction of what humanism developed
Uncertainty	About the meaning of live	About letters inspiring friendship	About the danger of technology
Complexity	Mass production	Savagery	The grip on our being
Ambiguity	Between technological change and population growth	Between thymos and epithumia	Between meaning that appears and meaning that does not

Latour. However, given the impact of the VUCA characteristics in technology, in this chapter we focus on philosophers of the classical philosophy of technology like Jaspers and Heidegger. They start as indicated from the fundamental impact of technology on the economic and cultural events of society (Table 1).

3 Jaspers

3.1 Volatility

The early twentieth-century philosopher Jaspers puts much emphasis on the totally new kind of technology that arose since the industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. The what Jaspers calls *demonic* technology that man elaborated since modernity turned against man in the form of what he calls the massification of our being in the world. The word devil is derived from the Greek word *diabolos*, which means ‘creating confusion’. The Devil commands a force of angry spirits or demons. The question arises whether today the continuous technological development of forces to create volatility isn’t also causing confusion. With the metaphor of technology as a demon, we are far from Socrates’ concept of *daemon* at the beginning of Western philosophy. Socrates stressed the importance of keeping our needs in check. Only then does our inner conscience or *daemon* affirm itself. However, man often creates technology and volatility to help satisfy his un-mastered needs. As a boomerang then technology risks depriving man of a meaningful life in accordance with his *daemon*. Jaspers points to the person-alienating nature of technology: an instrument of man who is too much guided by excessive requirements.

3.2 Ambiguity

The link between technological change and population growth is the next aspect Jaspers emphasizes. The current world population of seven billion was not possible without the stated technological breakthrough. And like in a vicious circle, seven

billion people also need more and more technology: a typical illustration of the ambiguity behind technology. It seems to relieve us of work and to save time. However, in reality, technology increasingly takes away our time. Think of our daily influx of emails. Parallel with this is also the already mentioned constant wish to satisfy increasing needs through technology. Technology then generates more needs than it fulfills, on the one hand by the increase in population that it makes possible, and partly because it allows people to produce new goods, which creates additional needs. All this requires a bureaucratic organization of society which, as a machine, leads society to what Jaspers calls massification.

3.3 Complexity

Jaspers then explains how the massification of our existence is expressed both in mass production and also in the phenomenon of the crowd or the masses. It illustrates the complexity that surrounds our institutions. According to Jaspers mass production deprives the people of a vital and meaningful involvement in the production process of goods. The commitment to the unique good fades away, because our consumption society requires that as soon as possible the good is replaced by a new and better type. Think of our mobile telephones that have ever shorter life spans.

A similar phenomenon occurs according to Jaspers when one considers the development of the crowd, in our complex society. In the masses of mankind the uniqueness of the human person is increasingly replaced by their function, allowing man to be replaced much faster. Your function is important, not so much who you really are. By destroying the importance of our individuality in the workplace, the possible meaning that our job can provide is threatened. Therefore Jaspers wants to transcend the complexities behind technology: despite technology but also thanks to technology. He looks for what he calls a new closeness to the world, a contemplation, a ripening, and a real presence. In this way, beyond complexity, it would still be possible to reconnect with what gives sense to man, through the connectedness of our existence with man and thing.

3.4 Uncertainty

To exist, according to Jaspers, means that we are not just free to develop our existence. We are invited to do this in an authentic way. This means existence as free authenticity. Grasping the core of our existence therefore is summarized by Jaspers in a personalistic way: the existential self or man as a relatively free genuine personality instead of an absolutely free individuality amongst the masses. Existence according to Jaspers means that man knows that in the end only he himself can design his existence. But despite his existential freedom, man not only relates to himself. The fact is that man owes his freedom not to himself. Freedom happens to man, in such a way that for Jaspers it is evident that one also has to take into account

the mode of transcendence. However, transcendence for Jaspers certainly is no kind of deity. He speaks of transcendence in an immanent way: also in technological artefacts. The transcendent behind these technological objects only shows itself when man is really open to it. Otherwise uncertainty about the meaning of life prevails. Exploring Heidegger later on in this chapter, we will explain this further.

4 Sloterdijk

4.1 Ambiguity

In the book with the Heideggerian title *Zorn und Zeit* by the contemporary philosopher Peter Sloterdijk, the ambiguity between thymos and epithumia has a central place. By *Zorn*, which means anger, Sloterdijk namely refers to Plato's thymos, the pride or persevering in the human being as opposed to the cupidity or desire of the epithumia. In fact man (kind) always had difficulties in adequately controlling pride and desire. Today it is not permissible to give so much free rein to our epithumia or endless needs through technology and the economy. Especially when we overlook the public good, for instance in the case of the risks of a nuclear power plant (necessary for our technological artefacts). Aspiring strongly to increase the satisfaction of needs, which is driven by epithumia, at first sight might promote a sort of private meaningfulness. Sloterdijk however points out how a greater activation of the thymos to optimize public meaningfulness is at least equally important. We should avoid a situation in which man more and more responds to his or her so-called endless mimetic needs, that is to say: the need to compare oneself constantly with others. This results namely in increasing social costs such as burnout and depression, but just as much in environmental pollution. For this, according to Sloterdijk, a more restrictive ethics is desirable, based on a thymos driven energy for the public benefit. We should not necessarily realize everything that we can realize technologically, Sloterdijk explains. To counter this epithumia driven mimetic imperative, pride or thymos is essential. Only then will the public domain be more in balance with the private domain, the political with the economic, and the polis with the oikos.

4.2 Volatility

It is interesting to see how Sloterdijk in another publication, *Regeln für den Menschenpark* (1999), in a techno-philosophical way describes the nature and the function of ever changing humanism. For Sloterdijk humanism is a friendship-founding telecommunication through the medium of writing. Actually since time immemorial philosophy as a literary genre has always represented humanism. Not only by articulating friendship with respect to wisdom (knowledge) but also by encouraging people to develop friendship with the other (ethics), which also guaranteed meaningfulness thanks to a realized friendship with oneself. Without

the volatility of telecommunication channels such as those of the Romans, the Jews and the Muslims, Greek philosophy had never come down to us. Think of for instance the writings of Seneca regarding stoicism that had originated many centuries before. There could well have been no humanism at all, Sloterdijk argues. The same goes for the telecommunication of the Jews (Maimonides and others) and Muslims (Averroes and others) who in the eleventh to twelfth century transmitted to us via Spain ancient philosophical books of authors like Aristotle (Abicht and Opdebeeck 2015).

4.3 Uncertainty

Why is this humanism evaporating today? If one wants to develop a telecommunication link between what Sloterdijk (in the line of Jaspers) calls the inhabitants of a modern mass society, the art of writing letters inspiring friendship has become outdated. What else was philosophical writing, an opera or a novel but an inspiring letter concerning some kind of friendship? The technology of humanism which made people live together in certainty, as Jaspers explained, according to Sloterdijk gradually was replaced by post humanist (Herbrechter, 2013) techniques such as radio, television and especially the Internet (Facebook etc.). One is confronted here with the question of the failure of a certain kind of technology. For Sloterdijk the era of humanism as a school and formation model is over, because one can no longer hold the illusion that significant political and economic structures can be organized following the friendship model of the literary society. Uncertainty became the point of departure. Consequently humanism gradually made way for what Jaspers already called massification and Sloterdijk today calls an unpredictable savagery: either as direct, warlike and imperial brutality or as everyday animalization of man in a media world of entertainment. One can compare this with what Jaspers wrote about a society losing oneself in entertainment so that nearly only sensation remains.

4.4 Complexity

Like the massification of Jaspers, the savagery of Sloterdijk relies on complex technology. War today eminently is trying out the latest technology. A technology initially invented for military purposes, such as the Internet, now dominates the whole society. Moreover entertainment is both literally and figuratively tied to more and more evolving media such as Tinder and Bumble. The militarism and decadence of the Romans are never far away. As Sloterdijk explains, it proved impossible to tame man through the antique and classical literature and the arts. Or, as explained above, *epithumia* and *thymus* appear not (or no longer) to be in equilibrium.

5 Heidegger

5.1 Volatility

For Heidegger (1947/2000) in his *Brief über den Humanismus*, written in 1946, the problem of the failure of humanism however lies in man himself, together with its systems of metaphysical self-exaltation. The nature and volatile dynamics of changes he sees appearing are destroying what humanism developed to try to find an equilibrium with technological evolution. It is important however, that Heidegger underlines not to put humanism in question, as if humanism would have overestimated the power of the humanitas. Humanitas is understood to mean the formation of a better man through immersion in the ancient creations of Antiquity. On the contrary, Heidegger questions humanism because it doesn't rate humanitas highly enough. Therefore Heidegger wants to get rid of the humanist definition of man as a rational animal. For Heidegger the essence of the divine is nearer to us than the strangeness of living beings like animals. The reason why in the opinion of Heidegger one can still speak philosophically about the humanitas or fundamental dignity of the human being is that man himself is addressed by *das Sein* or Being. Man is being called to be a guardian of Being. For Heidegger it is essential that it is not man who, as a kind of mindfulness expert, can take the initiative to attend to Being or whatever one might mean by the transcendent. It is Being itself that appoints man as a keeper or a guardian. Heidegger then speaks about the "Lichtung". The place where Being manifests oneself. Because Heidegger defines man as guardian of Being, a restraint is imposed on man. We are back to the temperance of Socrates, Aristotle and the Stoics. This presupposes a reflection that requires guarding the silence more effectively than the broadest humanistic education could ever be able to do. Heidegger talks about expectantly listening to what will be dictated by Being itself. But then, according to Heidegger, man has to become quieter and be more tamed than the humanist could become from reading the classics. And so it is Being that directs. Being gives hints to the really concentrated (like in meditation) quiet guardian. Heidegger actually encourages man to an asceticism that transcends all humanistic education goals. People stop trying to be in the spotlight as strong egos. They can just exist as neighbors of Being, as mortal but blessedly weak, frail people. It becomes an ontological exercise in humility instead of the greed. That resulted in the already mentioned external effects of pollution and an increasing number of depressions and burnouts.

5.2 Uncertainty

Because of its intrinsic uncertainty, for Heidegger technology means a danger. Heidegger speaks about the 'highest danger' of technology. This concerns the dual way danger is present in our technological society or what Heidegger calls *das Gestell*. First, the fact that man conceives of himself more and more as a determined being or what Heidegger calls a *Bestand*. Heidegger's 'highest danger' implies that

another possible form of appearing out of the secret is made impossible. When the extent to which society can be socially engineered becomes so generally accepted, the eventuality of Heidegger's attention to the "appearing out of the secret in the unconcealed" disappears. It is not only overlooked, it cannot happen anymore. However, the moment the highest danger threatens our society, Heidegger at the same moment discovers a way out. As Heidegger's favorite poet Hölderlin, classmate of Hegel, expressed it dialectically, salvation comes close to us when danger looms: "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst das Rettende auch" ("where there is danger that which saves also appears"). Heidegger's vision is also an echo of the heart of Christian spirituality with which he was familiar, considering his great attraction to the philosopher and saint Augustine. Salvation after the danger is like in Christian spirituality, resurrection after the passion of Christ. Heidegger considers the possibility that in the current technological system or what he calls the *Gestell*, people could be addressed to act in a way that not totally prevents them from keeping contact with transcendence. In the conclusion we come back to this point.

5.3 Complexity

Reflection is what Heidegger calls the condition for achieving this way out. As a fruit of reflection, a new arrangement or agreement concerning the impact of technology and our VUCA characteristics could be possible. Inspiration for this new arrangement he finds in another but similar form of *poiësis* next to technology, namely in art. The concept of art comes from *technè*, a form of *poiësis*, by which we mean both technology and art. Specific to art is that it refuses to let fade the importance of Being behind the art, as might occur in a sophisticated technological VUCA context or *Gestell*. In art the appearance of Being is still possible. By doing so the appearance of Being is still clear.

Reflection to find a way out of the highest danger that modern technology creates leads to a specific attitude to technology, namely resignation or what Heidegger calls *Gelassenheit*. We overly depend on our technical equipment and cannot do without it. Everything depends on a complex way with everything. Actually Heidegger here is on the same wavelength as Jaspers. The core of the attitude of resignation to the (technological) things he postulates is what he calls at the same time saying no and yes regarding the insurmountably complex use of technology. Saying no in the sense of bluntly preventing technology from irrevocably getting a grip on our being. Heidegger wants to prevent a complex technological apparatus from establishing an exclusive claim on us.

5.4 Ambiguity

It is the relationship of resignation with regard to technology that makes it possible that the reflection outlined above leads to the rediscovery of sense behind or in technology. By distancing oneself from technology as described above, technology

stops being a threat to finding sense and transcendence in society. This ambiguity already popped up in Jaspers' thought. There appears an opening which allows us to discover that technology contains a sense. This sense can be bequeathed to us. Because this sense both appears and does not, Heidegger calls the sense behind technology *das Geheimnis* (the Mystery). Man is invited to accept daily life in another way. One discovers it is also possible to be less dependent on internet, mobile telephones and tablets. So man can prevent all the modern technical instruments that excite him every hour from becoming more real for him than the concrete reality around him.

6 Conclusion

This chapter started from the techno-philosophical premise according to which since modernity we are seeing technology becoming independent, having an impact on the economy, on management and on ethics. As was illustrated by philosophers like Jaspers, Sloterdijk and Heidegger, since then the utilitarian VUCA characteristics of technology are becoming more and more influential. However, the fact that in this chapter VUCA and its four characteristics were potentially linked with technology, to which we pay tribute, does not necessarily have to be interpreted in a pessimistic, deterministic way. To the contrary, when we begin to understand that we don't have an efficient answer to the possibly negative effects of VUCA characteristics on our society, maybe hope is the only right and meaningful answer. In the last pages of his *Idols of our Time*, the Dutch economist Bob Goudzwaard summarizes this hope in the metaphor of the morning star: "For many of us, hope comes only by the grace of a few tiny cracks in the wall which throw slivers of light on our bleak situation. That hope is then extinguished as one by one the cracks disappear and the darkness envelops us. But this is the opposite of spiritual hope! Spiritual hope is a hope of contrast: it revives in the *middle of the night*, just when the darkness seems to overpower us" (Goudzwaard 1984, p. 98). Or to say it again in the techno-philosophical language of Heidegger and Hölderlin: salvation comes near when danger is present: "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst das Rettende auch". Therefore it is important that both policy makers, organizations and individuals become engaged in examining which concrete actions can be taken by them (Opdebeeck, 2012). From the point of view of philosophers like Jaspers, Sloterdijk and Heidegger, only they themselves can provide the answers.

Reflective Questions

1. What is the essential difference between the classical philosophy of technology (e.g. K. Jaspers) and the modern paradigm (e.g. P.-P. Verbeek)? Describe also the historical context of this distinction.
2. What are the main characteristics that appear in the classical paradigm of philosophy of technology, as far as VUCA is concerned?
3. Explain how behind VUCA and technology, transcendence can be discovered.

References

- Abicht, L., & Opdebeeck, H. (2015). *The point of philosophy, an introduction for the human sciences*. Oxford: Peter Lang.
- Bostrom, N. (2005). Transhumanist values. *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 30(Supplement), 3–14.
- Brynjolfsson, E., & McAfee, A. (2011). *Race against the machine*. Lexington: Digital Frontier Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Goudzwaard, B. (1984). *Idols of our time*. Ontario: Inter Varsity Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1947/2000). *Brief über den Humanismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann.
- Herbrechter, S. (2013). *Posthumanism, a critical essay*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Nussbaum, M. (2010). *Not for profit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Opdebeeck, H. (2012). Responsibility in a globalised environment: A charter of human responsibilities. *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 3(1), 111–120.
- Sloterdijk, P. (1999). *Regeln für den Menschenpark: ein Antwortschreiben zu Heideggers Brief über den Humanismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Van Bladel, L. (1980). *Christelijk geloof en maatschappijkritiek*. Kapellen: De Nederlandse Boekhandel.
- Verbeek, P. P. (2005). *What Things Do? Philosophical reflections on technology, agency, and design*. Penn State: Penn State University Press.

Hendrik Opdebeeck is professor of philosophy at the University of Antwerp where he is affiliated with the Centre for Ethics. He studied philosophy and economics at the Universities of Leuven and Ghent where he obtained a Ph.D. with a dissertation on E.F. Schumacher (1911–1977). His research interest is focused on the cultural-philosophical backgrounds and effects of globalization. Opdebeeck is member of the Board of the Europe SPES Institute. His recent publications include *The Point of Philosophy, An Introduction for the Human Sciences* (Peter Lang, 2015), *The Wisdom of mercy as the foundation of business* (in L. Bouckaert, *Business, ethics and Peace*, Emerald, 2015) and *Responsibility in a globalized environment* (*Journal of Global Responsibility*, 2012).

Part III

Swaraaj: Self-Freedom: Towards Meaningful Fulfillment of Life Purposes

Karmic Leadership for a Mindful Existence

Anindo Bhattacharjee and Sandeep Singh

When we begin to see, we perceive that it exists for itself, not for us, has its own gigantic aims, its own complex and boundless idea, its own vast desire or delight that it seeks to fulfil, its own immense and formidable standards which look down as if with an indulgent and ironic smile at the pettiness of ours. And yet let us not swing over to the other extreme and form too positive an idea of our own insignificance. That too would be an act of ignorance and the shutting of our eyes to the great facts of the universe. (Aurobindo 1939)

1 Pure Existence in a Complex World

The question about the meaning of existence, especially human existence has intrigued humans since time immemorial. What is the purpose of our existence in this world? For whom do we exist? We can look at this question in three different ways:

- Material purpose
- Philosophical purpose
- Spiritual purpose

When we have a material purpose, our sole aim in life is to fulfil our material desires and to accumulate wealth and whatever money can buy and we can conquer through the use of power and position. We simply accumulate and every satisfaction of one desire creates a ‘domino effect’ where more desires sprout and the

A. Bhattacharjee (✉) • S. Singh

Cabin 751, ASM-SOC, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, V.L. Mehta road, Vile PARle (West), Mumbai 400056, Maharashtra, India

e-mail: anindo.bhattacharjee@gmail.com

mindless pursuit continues. It is like 'narcotic drugs'. Even enough is not enough. Much of today's individualistic pursuits are driven by this material purpose. Even at the core of any enterprise/organization is a never-exhausting hunger for money, performance and expectations driven by highly individualistic material desires and purposes. Material possessions are the surest indicator of a person's success and so we have created an entire civilization with people whose minds are infested with material purpose as the final frontier of a "successful life". Such a purpose always leads to greed, jealousy, politicking, etc. which enhances the perception of life as a volatile and ambiguous "soup" of expectations and deliverances. Perform or Perish is now replaced by a new world view of "possess or perish".

People with a philosophical purpose are knowledge driven. They always try to find the logic behind any action or possession. So if an institution exists in a certain way, why it exists in that way. People with a philosophical purpose always question the norm and try to find out the logic behind the way things happen, the way we behave, the reason for the way we exist. A philosophical purpose gives rise to a life where we try to focus more on the macro aspects of our micro existence. However, the uncertainty remains, the ambiguity remains because we still try to explain reality with our own "structured logic" and remain caged in our own logic. Also we might find a logical reason to do something which is wrong or justify something which might not lead to human welfare. For example, there are many ills of both capitalism on the one end and communism on the other end but the followers of any of these ideologies tend to justify their philosophy even if it may not be relevant in a certain socio-economic context or situation. But still the philosophical purpose can be argued to be better than the material purpose because the meaning of existence is more fulfilling in this case as a dialogue begins towards resolution of the uncertainty and arriving at a more meaningful world view. Much of ethical issues which are being discussed in the context of business give primacy to this belief and purpose.

The spiritual purpose is the most difficult and the path less travelled. The reason for this is that most of us don't understand or have a clear understanding of the word "spirituality". In fact it is generally a vague term which has different cultural meanings and connotations. For example in certain orthodox traditions, it is synonymous to following the dictums of a religious scripture and so is again like remaining in a self-created cage of the mind. In other traditions, it is about realizing one's spirit or "soul" or "Self" but then again philosophically the definitions of "Self" or soul still remains vague and ambiguous. So this adds more to the already existing ambiguity of the world view. However, amidst all ambiguity we can still arrive at a world view where instead of rejecting uncertainty or ambiguity, we embrace this volatility and complexity as a process of necessary churning of the eternal omnipresent self-explained reality which is purely experiential and does not need any philosophical explanation.

In Indian tradition, some of the great seers like Trilangya Swami or Ramana Maharishi have always preached the importance of being silent. The wise one remains silent because truth or reality is nowhere but "now and here". However our existence in a material world cannot be ever in silence or inaction. But silent

contemplation or finding time to just be quiet and doing nothing, might help in understanding the deeper message in the silence of the Universe. The deeper flow of the Universe where the Universe is constantly flowing, where the actions of the various “actor” of the cosmos be it organizations, stakeholders or the natural environment are constantly churning this reality and contributing or rather co-creating the reality that we witness on a macro level. Such an understanding can lead to a possible interpretation of the “pure existence” of the individual or organization in an ever evolving cosmic reality. The Great Aranyaka Upanishad’s notion of “Aham Brahmasmi” or “I am the Universe” actually brings forth this argument that the meaning of our existence and the cosmic existence are not discrete but deeply interconnected. In fact the individual and the cosmos co-create the very existential reality that the individual as well as the various “actors” of the cosmos perceive.

What we need is a spiritual view of this ever-evolving reality just like a seer who never sees any dichotomy between the *material* and *spiritual* existence of the individual.

2 4Ps of Karmic Leadership: Towards a Conscious Reality of the World

The two things common in all the three approaches towards understanding our existential reality viz. material, philosophical and spiritual, are:

Our Actions (Karma)

Our experience/the act of witnessing the reality (*pratyakshadarshi*).

A leader has always been defined as one who has the “vision” or foresight and who has the ability to communicate this vision to a set of followers. One of the ways in which vision can be defined is a clear and distinct view of the future. Another way to define vision is to look at it as a set of causal relationships between the various elements of “reality” which are responsible for the way the “dynamic” reality evolves over a period of time. Reality can be seen as a set of action-reaction or *karmic* cycles evolving in space time and a leader is always aware and awake to this evolving reality by being the witness to this evolution. However, the way he responds to this reality depends on the way (s)he interprets this reality using the psychological and intellectual faculty. Every leader has a concurrent view of the world which is a mix of the three elements viz., material, philosophical and spiritual. Which of these three views dominates in his/her perceptual interpretation of reality determines the set of actions that he/she involves in or persuades others to involve in and so determines the *karmic* cycles (s)he creates that influences the evolving cosmic reality of which even the organization that (s)he leads and the organization’s stakeholders are a part of. Also, a karmic view offers management a possible facility for being more caring about the needs and fates of other stakeholders, as profit-orientation would no longer be attached as a factual constraint to merely accumulate money (Köllen 2016).

So, in order to understand how leaders should behave in a VUCA world demands a karmic interpretation of actions and intentions of a leader. We can define a *karmic* view of leadership where the performance of a leader is determined by the following 4Ps:

Purpose, Passion, Patience and People Any leadership program that intends to create adaptive leaders must infuse the understanding of each of these elements to its participants.

2.1 Purpose: Embrace the Ambiguity and Change

Though this sounds a cliché word but still almost all leadership failure starts at this point when the leaders loses vision or focus on their “internal compass” (Bhattacharjee et al. 2015). And this, as we have explained before, is determined by the way the leader defines the existential reality on an individual level. But the way the reality is defined or perceived in an organization is determined by the culture and the legacy the organization and its employees live every day. Any great organization has a DNA which is eternal and carries with it certain legacy which not only gives its employees a reason for pride but also confers a moral responsibility to continue that positive legacy. Let us take the example of the Tata Group, which happens to be one of the largest conglomerates in India employing thousands of employees and companies operating in well diversified businesses. But whichever business the stakeholders interact with, Tata is always defined by its sense of trust, social responsibility, stakeholder orientation, etc. It is because of the legacy of the Founder Jamshetji Tata which was subsequently carried forward by the successors to the “throne” of Tata Group like JRD Tata, Ratan Tata and now the current one Cyrus Mistry; all of them remain committed towards maintaining the image that Tata has. Their image and commitment to public accountability. It is also interesting to note that Jamshetji founded the Tata in the most turbulent times of business in colonial British India. The same is true also for the Reliance Group founded by Dhirubhai Ambani. It was also founded in the most turbulent times when Indian business environment was driven by a tyrannical License rule (called “License Raj” in India). So, the most volatile and uncertain times which are the driving force behind any turbulent business environment, not only pose a threat but also provide an opportunity or fertile ground for new businesses to prosper. And it all starts with a vision and well-defined purpose of a leader. Truly great leaders have unleashed the real enterprising power “inside-out” by embracing the inevitability of a “change” or evolving dynamic reality as a context for the emergence of new business models.

2.2 Passion: “From Obsession for Results to Obsession for Excellence”

Great leaders have the habit of performing and performing consistently because their passion is not for what follows the action but in enjoying performing the right actions itself, consistent to the purpose of the institution. Such leaders never lose focus by short-run setbacks or ups and downs of business and their inherent passion helps them to “steer the ship through the storms” (Bhattacharjee et al. 2015).

However, passion is often confused with obsession for results which is not completely right. Sometimes a notion is over-preached among executives that great companies are obsessed with results and it is all about “perform or perish” which promotes the idea of leaders being “ruthless”. Great leaders always try to motivate their followers to unleash their true potential for excellence. They help you to discover the “diamond” in you by being obsessed with perfection, precision and excellence. Look at how the Japanese electronics companies captured most of the markets in the west. It was not by only obsession for sales but rather obsession for delivering the best satisfaction and quality to the customers through utmost precision in the products and excellence in skills. An undying passion at the individual level of the leader translates into a collective one through continuously rewarding performance excellence and promoting a culture of quality and excellence where everyone understands their role in the microcosm that will lead to a significant outcome of reality in the “macrocosm”.

In the epic of *Mahabharata* in India, there is a story of archer *Eklavya*. *Eklavya* is a young boy from a low caste tribe, the son of a tribal chief. *Eklavya* was determined to be *Dronacharya*'s disciple, who was considered to be the foremost Archer Guru (teacher) of his times and who taught *Arjuna*, the one who became the greatest archer. However, he was rejected by the teacher, who felt he could not or should not teach someone from such lower caste (Pio 2011). But, such was the dedication of *Eklavya* that he created a statue of *Drona* in the forests and considered him as his virtual guru for learning archery. *Eklavya* became the self-taught archer and his skills and perfection surpassed that of *Arjuna*. One day after many years of this incident, *Drona* was taking a walk in the forests along with grown-up *Arjuna*. He saw a dog that was unable to bark due to an amazing harmless construction of arrows in and all around his mouth which prevented it from barking. Amazed to see such perfection he enquired and then came across *Eklavya*. *Eklavya* immediately bowed to pay his respect to *Drona*. On being asked by *Drona*, about how he has learnt the art to such perfection, *Eklavya* pointed to *Drona*'s statue and said: “You never accepted me as your pupil, but deep in my heart I always yearned for you and accepted you as my teacher”. The story of *Eklavya* gives us a very important lesson in leadership. The first lesson is that a great leader is always obsessed to learn and strives for excellence and perfection.

2.3 Patience: “Remain Calm at the Eye of the Storm”

The second lesson that the *Eklavya's* story gives us about leadership is that in the journey for excellence, there could be lots of uncertainty, bumpy rides, rejections and reversals. You may not have people to guide you or coach you to negotiate the way ahead. But never lose hope. What will really stand out amidst all of these is patience and perseverance. Embrace this uncertainty as an opportunity to self-learn and unleash some out-of-the-box solution. Change is a natural process. The evolving complexity is a natural process. As a leader we should remain calm and be a witness to these changing contexts and then try understanding the “flow” and evolution of the contexts and scenarios; then, accordingly decide upon our approach keeping in view the long-term vision and mission of the institution (Bhattacharjee et al. 2015). “*Remaining calm at the eye of the storm*” may be the appropriate metaphor to explain the meaning of patience.

Sometimes, there are also differences of opinions in the way you want to solve a problem and the way your team members in your organization want it to happen. Such differences may convert into arguments and “ego-rides” where one would try to impose one’s way over the other and vice-versa. In such a situation, a leader should step back, withdraw from the ego and just try to see things from the other member’s perspective too. Then, on a deeper contemplation the leader might be amazed with a completely new perspective being arrived which might never have occurred to him/her. Good leaders don’t impose but rather listen and try to engage others keeping everyone aligned to the core purpose. Also, when finally, a choice is being made, it is the leader who should have the courage to take responsibility for the outcomes of the team, because it is a choice they all have arrived at as a group collectively and not just by overweighing the opinions of one side over the other in the group. Such an approach also avoids jealousy or envy creeping into the organization which are the reasons for politics and unhealthy competitiveness among employees.

There is a story of Buddha and his disciple Ananda where Buddha asked Ananda to fetch some water from the nearby river-stream, as he was thirsty. Ananda went there and saw the water was stirred and dirty because a bullock-cart had passed the stream just before. Ananda upset with the situation returned to Buddha empty handed and narrated the situation. Buddha instructed Ananda, to go again and see the water and this time Buddha was convinced that Ananda will be able to fetch clean water that would quench their thirst. Ananda followed and went to the stream to see crystal clear water to his amusement. There are some important lessons of leadership from this story. The first lesson is that we try to fix a situation or problem according to our expectations, it goes more out of hand. The second lesson is to take a *pause* and be a witness to the evolution, understand the evolution and wait for the right context. In the words of a mindfulness expert Shuddhaananda:

It often happens when negative comes to you that, if you try too hard to fix it, if you force the situation, things only get worse. At that point the best thing is to distance yourself a

little, witness the whole situation with a deep sense of trust in the Divine design. (Shuddhaananda 2016)

2.4 People: Become a Responsible Leader

A leader is not in isolation but is part of interconnected reality which includes his/her relationship with people; the living stakeholders. Institutions that nurture the right “people” both inside and outside their firms; and have sense of compassion towards the society have the greatest chance of surviving business turbulence and also maintain a positive image among the key stakeholders (Bhattacharjee et al. 2015). Companies do this in many ways. They can engage the stakeholders through various CSR initiatives, sustainability programs, promoting social entrepreneurs, etc. Mark Benioff, the Founder of [Salesforce.com](https://www.salesforce.com), implemented a “1 per cent model” in his company which is intended to engage the various employees into various community development and philanthropic efforts. It created a social enterprise with the name [Salesforce.org](https://www.salesforce.org). Leveraging 1% of Salesforce’s technology, people, and resources [Salesforce.org](https://www.salesforce.org) today is a self-funded social enterprise providing best-in-class technology to social impact organizations. Proceeds from the technology also support employee volunteerism, grant making in the areas of STEM education, youth workforce development, and technology innovation, and the sharing of the 1-1-1 Model. In the words of Benioff—“The business of business is improving the state of the world.” [Salesforce.com](https://www.salesforce.com) happens to be one of the largest technology companies in the whole of United States and is being consistently rated as one of the best places to work in various employee or worker surveys.

Hamdi Ulukaya, the Founder and CEO of Chobani Yogurts, announced that the company would be giving around its 2000 workers, an award which would be equivalent to 10% of the companies privately held value once it goes public or is sold. Chobani has grown bottom up in the last 10 years into a multi-billion dollar business in the food services and manufacturing industry. According to an article published recently on Washington Post by Jena McGregor (2016), Ulukaya said in a memo to employees that the award was not a gift, but “a mutual promise to work together with a shared purpose and responsibility,” he wrote. “How we built this company matters to me, but how we grow it matters even more. I want you to be a part of this growth—I want you to be the driving force of it.” Both Benioff and Ulukaya are examples of leaders who have implemented programs and strategies to engage employees in the shared purpose of the organizations, where both the company and the employees as well as the various communities are benefitted. Both these leaders created the right set of actions today which will lead to the right set of responses from the various intended stakeholders and so in a *karmic* perspective creates positive *karmic* cycles. The earlier three Ps will not lead to lasting impact of leadership that will sustain over the ages, if the leaders do not create a way to implement the shared purpose by engaging the various stakeholders.

3 Conclusion

From the above discussions, it is clear that what we need in this new age are Karma Leaders who are not just magnetic attracting many followers, but also are adaptive in different circumstances and situations by being constantly mindful of the way the evolution of the context happens through different action-reaction cycles (karmic cycles). Karma leaders would make the right choices of their series of actions to engage with the appropriate karmic cycles that would charter the course of the organization's consistent growth and also create the appropriate response from the stakeholders. All this will contribute towards adaptability and resilience of the organizations amidst change driven by the various VUCA factors.

The above 4Ps of karmic leadership creates scope for future leadership programs to churn such adaptive leaders who will be action-oriented and so, will promote resilience and adaptability in the organizations they lead.

Reflective Questions

1. How our notion of existence relates to the way we perceive the complex reality?
2. How by refocusing our attention to our inner witnessing self like a *seer* might help us in making sense of the external evolving reality?
3. Why do we perceive reality the way we perceive it?
4. Why should we use a broader view of *karma*, i.e., the action-reaction cyclic notion for understanding the causal reality that we witness as VUCA?
5. Can there be an action-oriented framework for mindful leadership in a VUCA world from a *karmic* lens?
6. How such an action oriented framework of leadership might help organization to be more responsible as well as resilient in a turbulent business environment?

References

- Aurobindo, S. (1939). *The life divine*. Wilmot: Lotus Press.
- Bhattacharjee, A., Singh, S., & Singh, A. K. (2015). Understanding avnivesh for karmic model of leadership development. *Purushartha: A Journal of Management Ethics and Spirituality*, 7(1), 106–114.
- Köllen, T. (2016). Reconceptualizing profit-orientation in management: A karmic view on 'return on investment' calculations. *Philosophy of Management*, 15(1), 7–20.
- McGregor, J. (2016, April 27). Chobani's CEO is giving up to 10 percent of his company to employees. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2016/04/27/chobanis-ceo-is-giving-up-to-10-percent-of-his-company-to-employees/>
- Pio, E. (2011). Eklavya: The Archer par excellence! In *Stories to tell your students* (pp. 109–111). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shuddhaananda. (2016). *Moments of mindfulness No 1200*. www.courseinmindfulness.com

Anindo Bhattacharjee is an Assistant Professor of General Management at SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (Deemed to be University). His academic teaching background covers Marketing, Strategy and Ethics. He has conducted international work-shops, seminars and conferences on ancient philosophies and their relevance to contemporary management and leadership. He is also an active member of Course in Mindfulness at Naperville, IL (USA) that globally conducts mindfulness based programs in leadership and well-ness for corporates and academic institutions. His research interest is in emerging market strategy; sustainability; and ancient philosophies for contemporary management.

Sandeep Singh is currently working as Professor of Management at School of Management Sciences, Varanasi and has 20 years of experience in academics and corporate. His academic teaching and re-search areas include leadership, business ethics, spirituality and marketing communications. The author is coordinator of Centre for Spiritualism and Human Enrichment and member of academic council of SMS, Varanasi. He is also the executive editor of bi-annual refereed journal 'Purushartha' which is hosted on OJAS, INFLIBNET of University Grants Commission, India and indexed in bibliographic data-base of Scopus, Elsevier. The author takes active interest in organizing conferences, seminars and workshops in the field of spirituality and management. He has edited two books viz. Essentials of Leadership: Ethics and Spirituality and Spirituality in Management. He has also authored many journal chapters in the area of Indian Philosophy of Management and Ethics.

Spirituality in Indian Organizations

Gurinder Singh, Alka Maurya, and Veenus Jain

Man is a transitional being; he is not final... There is Power within that knows beyond our knowings; we are greater than our thoughts. (Sri Aurobindo)

1 What Is Spirituality?

Spirit means essence. It is beyond human and social discourses. Spirituality is about living inwardly and being in the present. Spirituality is the science of heart. It focuses on values such as honesty, compassion, co-operation, group harmony, dignity, patience and generosity. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. When we learn to connect with it we will find everything we are seeking. Most amazingly, when we tune ourselves to the same frequency or vibratory plane we realize that we are all connected to each other through our hearts; we are all one.

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, spirituality is something deeply religious, something relating to the spirit and sacred matters. There are many definitions of spirituality in different religions, many great leaders gave their own perspective of being spiritual and in today's world faith leaders have also defined spirituality and are guiding their followers on a spiritual path. In a nutshell, all the definitions of spirituality focus on the soul because defining spirituality without a soul doesn't make any sense.

India is a ground of immense spirituality. It is a territory, which has witnessed a lot of spiritual upheaval. Indian history is full of examples where powerful rulers and sovereigns suddenly arrive at a spiritually realized state and give up the

G. Singh • A. Maurya (✉) • V. Jain
Amity University, Sector-125, Noida, UP, India
e-mail: gsingh@amity.edu; amaurya@amity.edu; vjain2@amity.edu

material goods, status and supremacy they possessed to pursue the blessed path to true, inner sovereignty and freedom.

The Upanishads explain the concepts of *karma* (action), *samsara* (reincarnation), *moksha* (nirvana), *atman* (soul), *Brahman* (Absolute Almighty). They also set forth the prime Vedic doctrines of self-realization, yoga and meditation. The knowledge contained in the Upanishads is deemed to be higher knowledge as it deals with the knowledge of the self and the transcendental states of awareness. From the ancient times, the Upanishads attracted the attention of scholars from various religions and schools of philosophy. Jains, Buddhists and Hindus alike tried to understand and interpret them according to their own beliefs and traditions. The Bhagavad Gita is considered to be a summary of the knowledge contained in the Upanishads. The Jains believe in 24 tirthankaras who belonged to royal families and gave up kingship to become '*Jinendra*' (*Jina* means to conquer and *indra* means senses). This was the Jain manifestation of spirituality. It states that victory over one's senses is a higher goal than victory over people, land, treasure, kings and kingdoms.

When the British ruled the Indian subcontinent, many European and Indian scholars introduced the Upanishads to Europe and the rest of the world, drawing attention of scholars and philosophers alike.

In the modern world many leaders have advocated the path to spirituality. Mahatma Gandhi was a great leader who through his principles of non-violence, non-cooperation (i.e. non-cooperation with evil is as good as cooperation with the good), sacrifice, truth and righteousness set examples of spirituality for others to follow. Gandhi's philosophy focused on the spiritual liberation of man. He distinctly advocated that human welfare depends on the spiritual advancement of man, not on his material progress. Humans tend to lose sight of the ultimate purpose of life and set their eyes on money and power. This is a sheer blow to humanism. It neglects basic goodness. For Gandhi morality was more important than theology. "There is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness." Therefore according to him there is truth in each and every religion. He argued for '*sadbhava*' (goodwill and tolerance). Swami Vivekananda is one of most admired spiritual leaders of India. The world knows him as an inspiring Hindu monk. His motherland regards him as the patron saint of modern India and a source of spiritual power, mental energy, strength-giving and open-mindedness. Swami Vivekananda, one of the great Indian thinkers, promoted *spiritual humanism*, which renders loving service to the Divine, seeing its presence in all beings. According to him, spiritual humanism embraces the whole of humanity, regardless of race, culture, country, religion, or social affiliation. Swami Vivekananda stressed that the fall of a country or culture is caused by its spiritual bankruptcy. In the same way, its rise depends upon spiritual awakening. Spiritual falling brings in its wake moral fall, moral fall brings intellectual blindness, and intellectual blindness brings material downfall.

In today's world many faith leaders are guiding people towards the path of spirituality. In India, Ramakrishna Mission, Art of Living, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Vipassana Meditation, Brahmakumaris and many more organizations are guiding

people on how to lead a stress free life full of inner contentment in the VUCA world.

2 Spiritual Organizations in India: Helping Humanity to Understand the Essence of Spirituality

2.1 Art of Living

The Art of Living (AoL) is an educational and humanitarian movement started by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar in 1981. The organization is creating awareness about importance of spirituality among individuals and organizations. It is present in 155 countries, touching the lives of over 370 million people across the globe. The Art of Living is a multi-faceted organization with one of the largest volunteer bases in the world. Its international headquarters is in Bangalore, India. Outside of India, The Art of Living Foundation was formed in 1989 in the United States of America and in Germany. Since then, local centers have been established across the world. AoL offers programs focused on eliminating stress and experiencing inner peace based on Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's philosophy of peace: "Unless we have a stress-free mind and a violence-free society, we cannot achieve world peace." According to Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, "God is not someone sitting far away in the skies, he resides within us all. This is the essence of all religions—be it Vedanta, Sufism, Islam etc. In Christianity, it is said, that the kingdom of God is within you. . . Repose in yourself and you will experience waves of deep bliss arising within you that very moment". The AoL has spread peace across communities through humanitarian projects including conflict resolution, disaster relief, sustainable rural development, women's empowerment, prisoner rehabilitation, education for all, and environmental sustainability. According to a recent study conducted by doctors and researchers at the Fatebenefratelli e Oftalmico Hospital in Milan, Italy, SKY (*Sudarshan Kriya Yoga*), AoL's yoga-based breathing technique significantly reduces levels of anxiety and depression (Art of Living 2015a). The work of AoL is recognized all over the world and the founder, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, has received several international awards and recognition for his selfless service for the betterment of society. Some countries observe Human Value Week/Happiness Day in honor of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (Art of Living 2015b).

2.2 Vipassana Meditation

Vipassana is a Buddhist meditation technique that aims for a complete understanding of three characteristics: 'dukkha' (suffering or un-satisfactoriness), 'anicca' (impermanence) and 'anatta' (not-Self). It is one of the India's most ancient techniques of meditation. It was rediscovered by Gautama Buddha more than 2500 years ago and was taught by him as a universal remedy for all ills.

According to the Vipassana Research Institute, the promoter of Vipassana Meditation in India, Vipassana is a part of Buddha's teaching and can be accepted

and applied by people of any background. The Buddha himself taught ‘Dhamma’ (the way, the truth, the path). He did not call his followers Buddhists; he referred to them as Dhammists (those who follow the truth). Vipassana is based on the belief that all human beings share the same problems, and that a pragmatic method can be universally practiced to eradicate these problems.

Vipassana means to see things as they really are. This is a logical outcome of mental purification. Vipassana is a way of self-transformation through self-observation. Vipassana enables us to experience peace and harmony: it purifies the mind, freeing it from suffering and its deep-seated causes. The practice leads step-by-step to the highest spiritual goal of full liberation from all mental defilements. Vipassana can be learned by partaking in a 10-day residential course under the guidance of a qualified teacher. The courses are conducted at established Vipassana centers and other places. For the duration of the retreat, students remain within the course site and have no contact with the outside world. They refrain from reading and writing, and suspend any religious practices or other disciplines. They follow a demanding daily schedule that includes about 10 hours of sitting meditation. While they observe silence with their fellow students, they are free to discuss meditation questions with their teacher and material problems with the management.

There are three steps to the training as depicted in Fig. 1 below.

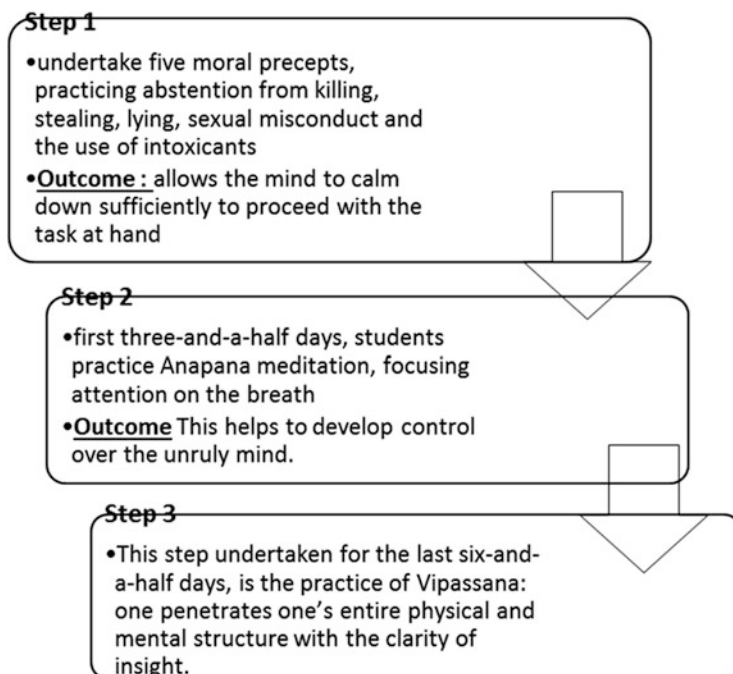


Fig. 1 Meditation during 10 day Vipassana course

The internationally renowned Vipassana guru Shri S.N. Goenka was invited to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland where he spoke to world leaders, including Bill Clinton, on true happiness.

2.3 Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission

Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission are spiritual organizations engaged in humanitarian and social service activities. The organizations were founded by Sri Ramakrishna (1836–1886), the great nineteenth century saint from Bengal, who is regarded as the Prophet of the Modern Age, and Sri Ramakrishna's chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902). These twin organizations have been silently working for more than a hundred years to catalyze the spiritual regeneration of humanity and propagate a non-sectarian and universal spiritual movement. The motto of the twin organizations is *Atmano mokshartham jagad hitayacha*, "For one's own salvation and for the welfare of the world."

2.4 Brahma Kumaris

Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya (also called Brahma Kumaris) is an international non-governmental spiritual organization with its headquarters located at Mount Abu, Rajasthan in India. Brahma Kumaris is a spiritual institution focusing on self-transformation through spiritual education. Various programs offered by Brahma Kumaris concentrate on re-discovering and developing human potential. This is done by providing a deep and clear understanding of self, God and human existence. The Brahma Kumaris' primary teaching is Raja Yoga meditation. Raja Yoga meditation replenishes mental and emotional energy thereby enabling individuals to develop new attitudes and responses to life. It empowers individuals with a clear spiritual understanding of self and connection with the Supreme Soul. The Brahma Kumaris offer various other courses for dealing with issues such as stress, failure in relationships, work-life balance etc. All these courses are offered free of cost and are based on the principles of Raja Yoga meditation.

3 Spirituality at the Workplace

Different authors have different viewpoints about spirituality in organizations. "Integrating spirituality into the workplace means creating a place where people can bring their whole selves, with all their talents and complex emotions; where there's enough safety so that people can speak the truth openly at meetings, rather than secretly in the hallway afterward; where there's an elevated sense of integrity. These ideas are not new, and may even seem obvious, but it's amazing how infrequently they are applied in the corporate environment and how harmful their

absence can be” (Marguerite 1999). The work environment these days is changing faster and more dramatically creating heightened stress. This leads people to look for more meaning in their daily lives. On an average we spend 8 hour a day at our workplace, if we add to it the time we spend commuting and attending meetings and conferences, the time spent at workplace goes up to 10 hour a day, which is 55% of our waking hours. On a highly stressful day at work the essence of an individual is lost in the number game, an unending effort to reach the targets. The countless hours that we spend in this stressful environment result in a need for renewal and fulfillment at the workplace. Therefore employees in this stressful environment dream of a workplace where they can attain the purpose of their life while enjoying their work. Moreover, in today's highly competitive global marketplace companies need to create and innovate continuously to succeed. This can be achieved only if employees are loyal, committed, balanced, trustworthy, responsible, take pride in their work and have the ability to lead business successfully in the complex environment. Therefore there seems to be a growing acknowledgment of a need for spirituality in the workplace. This is because a spiritual organization understands the emotional needs of its employees and strives to satisfy the needs of workers, customers and the community. A spiritual organization is stronger, more sustainable and is often quite profitable. Spiritual organizations provide a transparent atmosphere which promotes the expression of talent, brilliance, genius as well as sense of belongingness and contentment.

4 Spiritual Practices in Indian Organizations

Indian history is full of examples of great kings ruling the subcontinent only with the help of the strength and insight they gain from their spiritual practices. Asoka the Great began his reign by enlarging the kingdom his grandfather had established. He was successful and ruled almost the whole of India. But the battle of Kalinga resulted in such a loss of life that Asoka deeply repented, resulting in his spiritual transformation. Emperor Asoka put an end to his cruel ways and called off all military expeditions. He turned his efforts towards building schools, hospitals and spreading '*Dharma*'. The Dharma preached by Ashoka is explained mainly in terms of moral precepts, based on the doing of good deeds, respect for others, generosity and purity.

The contents of Asoka's edicts make it clear that all the legends about his wise and humane rule are more than justified and qualify him to be ranked as one of the greatest rulers. His decrees spoke of both a state and an individual morality. He hoped that the state morality upon which he based his administration would lead to a more just and spiritually-inclined society. He recommended and encouraged individuals to practice personal morality. Both these types of morality were imbued with the Buddhist values of compassion, moderation, tolerance and respect for all life.

The mighty mogul monarch Akbar became, Akbar the Great when he left fanaticism and integrated a secular and humanistic spirituality into his

administration. He rolled back Jazya (a tax levied by Islamic states on non-Muslim subjects) on the poor Hindus. He understood the spiritual healing capacity of music and made Tansen (one of the great Hindu Indian classical music composer, musician and vocalist) one of his Navratnas. (*Navratanas*—or “nine gems” was a term applied to a group of nine extraordinary people in an emperor’s court in India).

In this era of globalization, India has carved a place for itself on the world map. Indian companies now figure in the Fortune 500, Indians are figuring in Forbes’ list of billionaires, Indian companies are competing alongside global corporations and Indian IT professionals have created a niche for themselves in the world market. Employee satisfaction, retention, motivation are a few of the problems being faced by Indian companies while operating in this cut-throat competitive atmosphere. Regular training programs, compensation, rewards and increased salaries are few of the approaches adopted by companies in India to encourage loyalty of the workforce. In addition, Indian companies have realized the importance of spirituality for management practices and to create an atmosphere which is conducive for peaceful coexistence within an organization. Spiritually oriented organizations focus on the following seven activities:

1. Leadership practices that support growth and well-being of others.
2. Wellness programs for the employees. Wellness information displayed and distributed for the betterment of the employees.
3. Programs aimed at integrating work/family.
4. Programs that encourage personal and spiritual transformation.
5. Servant-leadership i.e. the intent to lead through service
6. Integration of core values and core business decisions and practices.
7. Practices to support the growth and development of all employees.

4.1 Spirituality at Workplace

Most of the companies in India observe “Wellness Week” where the emphasis is on the importance of physical, mental and spiritual aspects of employee health and better work environment. Employees have access to yoga lessons, aromatherapy, acupressure, weight-loss and dietary tips, clay pottery classes and tips on coping with workplace tension. Many organizations have a meditation room where employees can relax and let go of the stress from work pressure or other professional problems.

Many companies in India find that spirituality increases levels of employee retention. It also results in a more loyal workforce through forging strong bonds between the employers and employees. The objective for this move towards spirituality is also to equip personnel to cope with the work pressure, failure, competition and stress in today’s increasingly competitive and uncertain environment. Some of the companies that have institutionalized yoga and pranayama include Indian Railways, Intel, Snapdeal, Jabong, Infosys and Maruti Suzuki. In Mumbai, employees of Benzer get a 10-day break to learn the practice of

Vipassana. There are Vipassana centers in almost all parts of the world including USA and most European countries. Escotel, Oriental Insurance, Wipro, Dabur and Vam Organics are some of the companies who offer Vipassana retreats to their employees. Hero Honda Motors, TVS Motor Company, Satyam Computers, Hewlett Packard and Airtel have taken up Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation (TM) courses to improve employees' effectiveness, relationships and self-knowledge. Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a simple, natural, effortless practice whereby the mind easily and naturally comes to settle at the source of thought, Transcendental Consciousness, the source of all creative processes. Practice of TM settles down the individual's awareness evoking a unique state of restful alertness. The experience of Transcendental Consciousness brings the individual's latent creative potential to the forefront while dissolving accumulated stress and fatigue through a deeply restful state. The Maharishi Institute of Management has a separate cell that deals with corporate development programs. Companies such as ACC, Reckitt & Colman, Indian Petrochemicals Corporation, the Oriental Bank, SRF Ltd, Tata Tea and Tata Chemicals among others have benefitted from these programs. Eicher Consultancy Services holds personal growth, communication, yoga and meditation workshops for its employees. Mahindra & Mahindra provides Rational Emotive Therapy for stress-management. Rational Emotive Therapy is used to acquire attitudes and behaviors to be more peaceful towards ourselves, our families and neighbors, and ultimately, society (Varughese 2000). The Art of Living Foundation's Sudarshan Kriya is based on sahad yoga, combined with meditation and breathing techniques. They are gaining followers worldwide. Outside the corporate world, the foundation has offered numerous courses in troubled areas such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, India after the Gujarat earthquake, New York for those affected by the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and in Asia in the aftermath of the recent tsunami disaster. Hughes Software Systems does not confirm employees until they have completed an Art of Living course. A study by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences on 1000 senior executives in 25 companies who had done the Art of Living program had some interesting results. Around 88% of the respondents said they could handle stress better and deal with negative emotions. About 51% also felt that it enhanced their performance. Many organizations in India and abroad have benefited from AoL's programs for betterment of their employees.

AoL experts conducted programs for the employees of Mumbai fire brigade on the occasion of its 125th anniversary in February 2013. The AoL experts visited each fire station in Mumbai to conduct the Pranayama (breathing) lessons. The employees found the program very beneficial for dealing with stress and leading to a healthier life. They plan to continue the sessions in order to keep reducing stress in their lives (Times of India 2013). AoL sessions were conducted for the prisoners at Groenpunt Maximum Security prison in Free State province, South Africa. Many of the prisoners were very violent and had been convicted for rape, murder, smuggling drugs or abusing children. Many of them were HIV-positive and could expect to die in jail. Inside prison, violence was common among the inmates. The yoga sessions conducted by AoL experts helped the inmates to discover ways to calm themselves and adopt a more positive look at their lives, even if they never get out from behind bars (BBC News 2008).

In June 2015, Maruti Suzuki introduced sessions on spirituality by the Brahma Kumaris for all their 18,000 employees. Brahmakumari Shivani conducted the sessions on spiritual well-being. The aim of these sessions was to help the employees keep stress levels in control and avoid conflicts at work. Similar sessions were conducted by Brahma Kumaris at companies including Hero Honda Motors, Honda Motorcycle, Yamaha, Parle G, IFFCO, FCI, GAIL, Indian Oil, GMR, Spicejet, TCS, Wipro, Moser Baer, Honda Siel, Suzuki Powertrain, SBI and UBI (Economic Times 2014).

4.2 Spirituality Quotient (SQ): As Job Pre-requisite

Organizations are practicing spirituality to manage their Human Capital effectively. Right from recruiting new entrants into the organizations to talent retention, organizations are seeking to develop their spiritual dimension. Other than organizing the special training programs, the organizations are now looking for Spiritual Quotient (SQ) in aspiring candidates. Top management feels that people with high spiritual intelligence will be able to balance their professional and personal life more effectively. Moreover, an executive with a high SQ will look beyond profit margins and devote time to voluntary work and the betterment of organizations and employees. Senior management positions will require more SQ in addition to having high levels of IQ and EQ as jobs require creative insights (vision) and concern for ethical, environmental and larger issues.

4.3 B for Business S for Spiritual

Leading business schools in India are ardently promoting spiritual practices in business. These academic institutions have included courses on spirituality to equip their students to maneuver in a challenging, VUCA business environment. Many leading business schools started an elective course titled 'Self Incorporated', 'Human Values and Community Outreach' which draws on insights from spiritual texts like the Bhagavad Gita and applies them to a management context, promotes selfless community service and inculcates human values. Other schools have developed compulsory credit courses on topics such as 'The Science of Spirituality'. The objective of these courses is to equip students with qualities like internal cohesion, external resilience, ability to deal with stress and an ability to operate beyond the ego. Such qualities are required in today's world with its uncertain economy, job security and even volatile compensation packages (Economic Times 2013). Spiritual organizations, too, have opened management centers, including the Sri Sri University by Art of Living and Mata Amritanandamayi Math's Center for Value-Based Management Education in Coimbatore, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Maharishi Institute of Management and the Sri Sringeri Sharda Institute of Management. All these Institutes advocate yoga, pranayama and meditation and promote values such as social sensitivity, team spirit and the development of intuition and vision. Schools

and higher education institutes also have yoga and meditation sessions as a part of their curriculum, to ensure that spiritual foundations are laid in the early years.

5 Conclusion

When a person is engaged in a task, his or her intellect alone cannot ensure success. But the person should attempt a holistic approach where the body, mind and soul should be involved in the task. Organizations have now realized the importance of cultivating these values. They have made it part of their organizational responsibility to move towards a spirituality-based management system. Spirituality can help organizations to efficiently equip their employees to face the challenges in the VUCA world. In addition to hiring managers and leaders who have high spiritual quotient the organizations must focus on creating a spiritual culture within the organization enabling employees, on one hand to thrive in the VUCA world and, on the other hand, to help them be at peace from within. Organizations must focus on providing values and environment that can help the employees counter volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity with vision, understanding, clarity, and agility.

Reflective Questions

1. Explain spirituality as defined in Hindu Upanishads?
2. Discuss the role of organizations like Art of Living and Vipassana in promoting spirituality? How are programs offered by them beneficial to business organizations?
3. What initiatives have been taken by organizations in India to ensure peace and solace for their employees? Trace the impact of spiritual practices in Indian organizations operating in VUCA world
4. Critically analyze the need of preparing spiritually oriented professionals in the present era. Discuss the role of academic institutions in enhancing spiritualism in India?
5. Compare and contrast the role of SQ and IQ in managing business in VUCA world?

References

- Anti-Anxiety & Anti-Depression Effects of Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY). (2015a). *Press release of art of living*. Available at <http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/anti-anxiety-anti-depression-effects--sky>
- Art of Living, Programs, The Art of Living Course. Available at <http://www.artofliving.org/Programs/TheArtofLivingCourse/PartIProgram/tabid/87/Default.aspx>
- Brahmakumaris. (2014, September 12). *Maruti Suzuki introduces pilot sessions on spirituality and 'mind enlightenment' by Brahmakumaris*. Economic Times. Available at <http://articles>.

- economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-09-12/news/53850948_1_maruti-suzuki-maruti-employees-sessions
- Colombia Hails Sri Sri, Indian Spiritual leader for Peace Work. (2015b). *Press release of art of living*. Available at <http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/colombia-hails-sri-sri-indian-spiritual-leader%E2%80%8B-peace-work>
- Economic Times. (2013, September 13). *B-Schools pump up spiritual quotient in classrooms*. Economic Times. Available at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-09-13/news/42041738_1_spirituality-business-environment-bhagavad-gita
- Harish Janani (2003, November–December). Values in business. *Consecration*, 1(1).
- Jaisinghani, B. (2013, February 4). *Pranayama lessons for Mumbai firemen*. Times of India. Available at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Pranayam-lessons-for-Mumbai-firemen/articleshow/18327906.cms?referral=PM>
- Suma Varughese, New Age Goes Mainstream Back To Home, June 2000, Available at <http://www.lifepositive.com/Mind/holistic-living/holistic-living/newage.asp>
- Rigoglioso Marguerite. (1999, December 10). *Spirit at work: The search for deeper meaning in the workplace*. Working Knowledge: Business Research for Business Leaders. Available at <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/644.html>
- Peru Confers Sri Sri with 3 Awards for his Peace Work. (2015). *Press release of art of living*. Available at <http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/peru-confers-sri-sri-3-awards-his-peace-work>
- The Transcendental Meditation program, The TM Program at A Glance. Available at <http://www.tm.org/discover/glance/index.html>
- Vipassana Research Institute, Vipassana Meditation Technique. Available at <http://www.vri.dhamma.org/general/vipintro.html>
- Walker, A. (2008, December 24). *South African prisoners embrace yoga*. BBC News, Johannesburg. Available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7777912.stm>

Gurinder Singh the Amity Group Vice Chancellor, Director General, Amity Group of Institutions and Vice Chairman, Global Foundation for Learning Excellence, has an extensive experience of more than 19 years in Institutional Building, Teaching, Consultancy, Research and Industry. He is a renowned scholar and academician in the area of International Business and has spoken at various international forums which includes prestigious Million Dollar Round Table Conference, Harvard Business School, Thunderbird Business School, University of Berkeley, California State University, NUS, Singapore, and many more. He has received more than 25 International and National awards and has graced a host of talk shows on various TV channels. He is a mesmerizing orator and has the rare ability of touching the human soul.

Alka Maurya is Associate Professor at Amity International Business School, Amity University, Noida, India. She has 20 years of experience in teaching, research, activities related to promotion of international trade from India. Before joining AIBS in the year 2004, she had been associated with various projects of Ministry of Commerce, Ex-port Promotion Councils, UNCTAD, Coffee Board, APEDA and Coir Board etc. She has published number of research articles in her area of specialization. Teaching is her passion and she is shaping the young minds to take up the challenges in this dynamic and competitive environment.

Veenus Jain is a Professor at Amity Institute of Social Sciences, Amity University, Noida, India. She has 20 years of experience in teaching, research and academic administration. She joined Amity University as Jr. Vice President. She has been awarded the 'President Award' by the President of India for her service to mankind. Education is her passion and she is shaping the young minds to carve a niche for them in this competitive world by being themselves.

Organisation Development in the Point of Intersection of Competencies and Performance Potentials

Gyöngyi Major

“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.” (Albert Einstein)

1 Introduction

We live in a world that resembles Polykleitos’s derided sculpture.¹ One can read about the two sculptures of Polykleitos among the stories of Alianos. He made one according to his own imagination and the other according to the advice of passers-by and the opinion of the crowd. When he put the two sculptures on display, the first met with the crowd’s appraisal, while the other was derided. Polykleitos then said: “Well, this one was made by you.” Polykleitos shaped this derided sculpture not by his internal intuition but listening to others, who only took part in making the sculpture as outsiders and began to give instructions to the sculptor based on facts like the sculpture had a missing arm or leg. And without this identification, the sculpture had no harmony. The piece remained on the platform of recognition and did not get to the experience of authenticity, i.e. when the sculpture and the sculptor become one.

¹The stories of Alianos are quoted by Kaufmann (2000, p. 68).

G. Major (✉)
Institute for Strategic Research, Budapest, Hungary
e-mail: major.gyongyi@gmail.com

When we look at the specific features of the world of our days, we can find certain similarities to the above story. We live in a contradictory and disharmonic model of existence, along a life principle that goes against Totality—with a so-called “non-participating consciousness”. And although attempts have been made to give morals to the homo oeconomicus, this designed integration is unlikely to have the content that would lead us out of the current economic paradigm. Firstly because the fundamental motivation for unification remains in the context of a partial aspect.²

The real challenge, however, is to rise above the discrete criteria, which means the sublimation of the principles of usefulness and virtuousness, appearing as independent entities, into a new, amalgamated quality. To be very exact, the category of cosmic usefulness, which can appear only in a higher quality of consciousness.

This study aims at pointing out that the creation of a value-creating network of interactions requires a far bigger and deeper change than inserting morality into the sphere of interests of economic management.³ Real change can be triggered by a basically new—participating—consciousness, which can also reinterpret the concept of morality itself.⁴ First of all because anything that raises barriers prevents merger and identification. Consequently, virtuousness rooted in the fear from facing some consequence is nothing else than generated anxiety. But the boundary should be felt knowing that it does not actually exist. We are free and it is this freedom that should be utilised in a cosmic manner (Major 2004). To be more precise, the awareness of mutual dependence, which, by definition, contains the recognition that if we protect others from ourselves we protect ourselves the most.⁵ Paradoxically, self-interest is the most effective factor against self-centeredness. It is

²A problem can always be overcome only if methods other than those applied before the occurrence of the problem are used.

³The complexity of global economy is increasing. To be able to handle this, it is inevitable to develop participation and involvement based, joint, creative, innovative and systematic thinking and skills. Consequently, the interest of organisations is to reinterpret the concept of interest itself. This study discusses organisational culture change on a broader horizon, in the context of the social renewal currently developing along the new consciousness. And although the study does not particularly focus on organisational development practices, it is, naturally, connected to the concept of Transforming Organizational Presence (See: <http://solintezet.hu/rendezvenyek/>, Senge et al. 2005). In essence, it aims at examining the social medium in which the development of organisational intelligence is possible in and through the integration of autonomy and cooperation, dialogue and the emphasised presence of the feminine principle.

⁴In the broadest sense, morality is interpreted as the cosmic utilisation of the activity of the self, i.e. by no means as a rigid system of values encapsulated in itself, but, rather, as an essential principle that ensures the dynamism of existence. In the broadest sense, morality is self-understanding. The updated system of relations between the part and the whole. The phases of the understanding of this system of relations are presented by the Zen fable quoted at the end of this study.

⁵The paradigm shift in economic management is not dependent on the state of consciousness. It depends on the internal knowledge (experience) that the destruction of others means our own destruction; that by causing pain to others, we mostly hurt ourselves.

because if we obstinately focus on self-interest, we demolish our own condition of existence.⁶ And if we take responsibility for our own relationships, we actually assume the biggest responsibility for ourselves. And this is perhaps the noblest service that we can render to others, by providing it to ourselves. One pearl will reflect all the other pearls.⁷

The recreation of the harmony of existence presumes the cosmic interpretation of the self-image of the individual. In essence, it is the redefinition of the self-image. A cosmic identity, which is not a category that can be understood by using only the mind.⁸

In the global information economy/fight, everyone is competing against the moment. Paradoxically, however, only those will remain in this competition who can submerge into timelessness with the moment. Since, with reference to Heidegger (2001),⁹ we can say that each moment is timeless.¹⁰

When one is about to take an inspiration, he is sure to make a (previous) expiration; when he is going to weaken another, he will first strengthen him; when he is going to overthrow another, he will first have raised him up; when he is going to despoil another, he will first have made gifts to him:—this is called ‘Hiding the light (of his procedure)’. (Laozi)

2 The Meta-subjective World of the New Epistheme

Modernity has occupied society’s space-time structure in a manner more efficient than any other former epistemological construction (Márfai Molnár 2005). However, the amalgamation of heterogeneous qualities of existence into a homogeneous space has inevitably brought about the emptying and the virtualisation of the integral whole—due to the special autotelic nature of the process and to the resulting performativity, which also becomes tautological. The inosculating

⁶In essence, the glorification of self-interest is a direct consequence of the doctrine which interprets competition in its exclusiveness and in which the fight becomes autotelic and it also loses its creating power. Petrifying in this zero-result game, economic competition has by now actually become a category in the “decreasing stock” and, as a result, everyone becomes a loser in the war. We should emphasise, however, that war is part of existence. In one of the most ancient memories, in Vedic literature (Rigveda), the king of gods is Indra, the god of war. In a higher-level interpretation, war is not only about subsistence but is also a reminder of mercifulness to everyone. War is the exercise of humility itself. And the winner must be far more humble than the loser.

⁷For man to be able to coordinate his own existence, his creation of concepts should also reflect totality. In the broadest sense, the root of unsustainability is a system of concepts and values centred around self-interest. Social transformation can be brought about by the transformation of the self-image—at the same time, individual self-images develop on the ground of society’s system of values. See the chart: “. . .How do we link personal transformation to the collective?”

⁸It is much more about experiencing the cosmic order of magnitude of individual existence: tuning, sympathy—understanding existence outside ourselves. Participating consciousness.

⁹According to Heidegger (1992, pp. 27), time itself is also timeless.

¹⁰Drops scatter on the road—the road does not run with them (Vankó 1976, pp. 15).

economic problems are a mirror of a far deeper and more general crisis that interweaves the entire human culture, through the collapse of specific, economically interpretable balances,¹¹ which, in the broadest sense, can be considered as the failure of the social space-time structure pervaded by performativity (Lyotard 1984, pp. 55). In other words, the failure of the paradigm in which legitimacy itself has also become performative and declared the increase of performance the sole aspect of existence (Lovász 2015, pp. 20).

The globalisation of the economic paradigm of growth, whose rule and system of impacts now cover even the most remote corners of the Earth, i.e. has filled the entire space available to it, and its further spreading—which is the essence of its intrinsic nature—can be achieved only through the gradual consumption of its *raison d'être*, is the result of the value paradigm of modernity in the broadest sense and, hence, the crisis phenomena of this current value paradigm indicate the paradigm's failure and the failure of the spirit that gets manifested in it. This is so as albeit the global social space is universal, it is still inconsistent and self-contradictory.¹²

When a system reaches the boundaries of its own development, it arrives at a bifurcation point, where it either collapses or reinterprets itself at a higher level. It must be emphasised that the necessary breakthrough can be reached only through a real paradigm shift triggered by a change of the system of values, which penetrates as deep as the concept of existence: it is such a paradigm shift that will trigger a “domino effect” that covers the system of values and ethos and redefines lifestyle related and moral principles and, then, will also launch a general change in society. This means that it is a must that the new paradigm should be capable of creating a social space of cooperation which, owing to its openness, is capable of integrating the discrete spaces of action—and, as a result, non-participating consciousness will get sublimated into participating consciousness (See: Zsolnai 2001).

The fundamental attitude of participating consciousness, all-embracing sensitivity, however, not only unveils the hidden impacts of our actions on our planet, health and social systems,¹³ thus making the individual identity of the subject cosmic, but also broadens the dimension of reality.¹⁴ In the living universe of

¹¹The collapse of balances may be the start of processes which might become uncontrollable without proper consciousness. All further instinctive and autotelic actions will contribute to the termination of the *raison d'être*, thus making destruction even worse, and, consequently, activities can be performed only with a high level of consciousness—with a similar level of energy to that of the balancing impacts operating in nature. The era of spontaneous and self-centred economic management should be ended, to ensure that the Earth as a life-space can offer as or similarly healthy and full a life as it did to previous generations. Consequently, the new paradigm should entail the desire and opportunity for us to consider and interpret action and energy releases not in themselves but in their interaction with the environment.

¹²Plus ça change—plus c'est la même chose.

¹³For more on the subject, see: Goleman (2011).

¹⁴In meta-subjective reality, it becomes possible to close the gap between knowing and identity. As regards this gap, see: Gellner (1974).

interactions, the sensing of the space-time structure is no longer performative: it is in the presence-sensing act, i.e. perception, that it becomes reality: a meta-subjective reality.¹⁵

Participating consciousness works as a real counter-force against society's performativity. However, it neutralises not only the concept associated with objective reality but, as a result of this neutralisation, also enables the unfolding of alternative principles and spaces of existence.¹⁶ In the space-time structure, which cannot be made independent of the subject, the concepts of usefulness/utilisation and, *par excellence*, the entire mechanism of economic organisation get reinterpreted.

At this point, our focus should be shifted from the static concept of "objective reality" to another concept, which is purely dynamic.¹⁷ This concept is "creation". With the former, the knowers, with special respect to the management of an economic organisation, must study immutable laws that fall outside themselves and persons in general and generate the dynamics, through the proper application of these laws that produce the most optimal result in the objective system of circumstances. If, therefore, the management do their job properly, they will achieve the maximum that is objectively achievable. By contrast, with creation, there is no objective barriers to thoughts, as the very essence of creation is that something is created that cannot be deduced from what has so far been and existed. Man is thus not a resource but the creator itself. And creativity is power.¹⁸

Naturally, the creative power of thought now has very rich literature. This rich literature contains superficial concepts but also systematically constructed systems of thought built on a strong or even traditional foundation. For the time being, it is not easy for one to find their way among these (Fig. 1).

Nevertheless, one thing seems certain: the paradigm that wishes to rise above the scheme of objectivity created by performativity lays a far heavier emphasis on the individual and the individual's intrinsic development—the spiritual journey, whose cultural footprints survived mostly in the oriental traditions and which is by no means a horizontal increase of knowledge but, much more, a vertical journey that is travelled in the human being, in the person. This vertical interpretation of development may lead to the universality that enables the existing, turning it into its own essence, to show compassion to everything and everyone. And to have respect for self and others: Self-discipline—Quantum Tolerance.

¹⁵John Wheeler's words give the term "universe" a strange "participating universe" meaning (Quoted by: Mehra 1973).

¹⁶Existing means that we create our own existence.

¹⁷"Static pattern slid into fluid process." (Wilson 1998, p. 2).

¹⁸Power in the metaphysical sense, which has degraded into mostly fantasy in performativity.

Fig. 1 Relationship among perception, creation of reality, action and outcome



3 Social Transformation and Transforming Organizational Presence

I wonder if we wouldn't become more gracefully productive by recognizing that we are all living cells with organisms like cities, bioregions, continents, and the earth itself. Could we lessen our stress, become healthier and more whole, if we saw our work as simply helping these organisms realize their living wholeness?

(Daniel Kemmis, Mayor of Missoula, Montana, 1995)

The lesson is there both globally and locally: to look for the future courses of thought and action that can potentially be valid. The responses to the challenges are of extreme importance as they must support both faith in the breakthrough plan and moral freedom. An open system operation has to be presented now that enables the revision of the courses of motion and, at the same time, creates a new order of concepts, whose main area of interest is no longer competitiveness but life and viability.

The most urging task of our age is to induce the spiritual impulses that may become the constellation of group-cohesion-based action. A new, integrated space of meaning, which is a context network and, incorporating the possibility for feedback, also carries the requirement for self-reflexive retrospection and understanding¹⁹ and, at the same time, creating interaction between existences, becomes a special ontology of coexistence.²⁰

The world cannot be disassembled into parts that exist independently of each other: the development of separate entities is merely an illusion.²¹ This misconception of the past centuries has been unveiled by the restructuring of truth dimensions, which came along partly owing to the turn that natural sciences took in the twentieth century and partly due to the reflexive manifestation of the Whole, which have become perceivable in different crisis phenomena. Meanwhile,

¹⁹The highest value is the quality of individual experiencing: experiencing life as deeply as possible and the freedom with which we create the circumstances of and the need for experiencing (Horányi 2006).

²⁰Knowing the interrelations between phenomena is more important than knowing the ultimate substance itself (Needham 1956). Even more so as, relying on Chinese philosophy (and, today, also quantum physics), we think that things are only temporary manifestations of the everlasting motion of the Tao (Capra 1990).

²¹If for anything, it is because of the narrow horizon of our view that the illusionistic nature of the part-aspect approach does not become obvious to us.

however, this restructuring not only triggered the renewal of the means of communication of knowing but has turned the motivations for the creation of truth²²—whose main cornerstone is comprised of the principles of applied economics—increasingly towards the recreation of a living, organic, ever-moving reality.²³ Again, we know that life is interaction,²⁴ dynamics and, in the broadest sense, communication.²⁵

The power that creates motion is always an intrinsic, essential trait of the subject. Metaphysical power—creativity—is the essence of the subject, the basic state of existence: operation that pervades the Whole.²⁶

“Things behaved in particular ways, not necessarily because of prior actions or impulsions of other things, but because their position in the ever-moving cyclical universe was such that they were endowed with intrinsic natures which made that behaviour inevitable for them.” (Needham 1956, pp. 281)

And although it seems ever more certain that the development concepts that were invented in the classic, mechanic ideology have become a dead-end and, in their objectified model, objectified Man himself, who has consequently become the impediment to real dynamics—now the challenge is not to redefine obdurate organisation development concepts and their mental models but to renew communication: to find the rhythm in receiver hermeneutics. It is through the success of efforts in this direction that the Subject can again become a creator in its spiritual experience of connecting to the source.

Consequently, the basis of organisation development—and the most important competency—is the presence sensing (“presencing”) ability. Presencing²⁷ opens up spiritual intelligence and, through it, the human being can identify with his cosmic self—thus the Cosmos itself also receives a new opportunity for self-realisation and self-expression. Through the justification of the subject, the universe also gets

²²Searching for a cosmic root, the intellect finds the principle of life.

²³Man can create imaginative spaces outside of himself and populate these with anything, even the creatures that seem the most real—these will still fall outside the scope of reality. Man must return to himself and discard all the means the he has pinned his hopes on: there is no means or way to reach happiness other than in man himself. He is the only space, means and aim for and to happiness. There exists no “outside”: even that is Inside (Sütő 2005).

²⁴Life itself is also a symphony (*symphonia*: concord of sound).

²⁵In the broadest metaphysical sense, it is communication with love. On a wider horizon of interpretation, the content of communication means far more than the profane exchange of information. Moreover, it is also more than opening the mind. In a deeper sense, it entails “emphatic listening”, in which the heart and emotional intelligence can open up and, in the most abstract sense, even experiencing consubstantiality may become also become possible. For more on the subject, see Otto Scharmer’s theory of the renewal of communication.

²⁶With reference to Ervin Schrödinger, we can say that only what lives is what operates. What lives, operates.

²⁷Otto Scharmer’s term; “presence”+“sensing”.

Fig. 2 Personal and systemic transformation

Assumption: Systematic transformation is the result of personal transformation...



...How do we link the personal transformation with the collective

justified. This is the only real route for development—the development of reality (Fig. 2).²⁸

4 Closing Thoughts

The dominance of the extroverted nature and the centrifugal forces of modernity inevitably brought about the requirements to fulfil superficial expectations and to be successful. However, as long as we design our development strategy along the abstract and inhuman criterion of successfulness, we will not achieve real organisational development—i.e. one with an energy flow with a positive outcome. Moreover, we will not even achieve happiness as the joy of sacrifice is certainly more real than the supposed happiness offered by attachment and possession. It is

²⁸The concept of development cannot be separated from man. If we interpret development in general, independently of the self, we objectify not only development itself but man himself, too—which, in essence, may mean that development becomes meaningless. In this sense, the entire concept of development may be worth reconsidering, taking into account the morals of the fable about the Ox and the oxherd. This may lead to a further fine-tuning of the development concept, which is interpreted in the context of happiness. Happiness can be conceived as walking the entire spiritual journey outlined by the fable, and, in this respect, the journeys made by individuals may get translated generally into the social context of development.

only consciousness transformed into non-attachment that can deliver us from fears and can transform the responsibility for existence into human activity.

The concept of creating and living systems may be rooted only in the very depths of the essence of the subject, i.e. cosmic consciousness—the desire to confirm existence, the essence of existing.²⁹

For the above reasons, this study recommends to the attention of leaders not conventional organisational development practices but a fable.

The Ten Oxherding³⁰ is one of the most masterly fables of Zen Buddhism. In this study, we would like to use it as the starting point to outline how man can create—by ruling, leading and taming himself—the new economic paradigm, one that is reinterpreted in spirituality and is inspired through the internal practice of self-transformation: management that is capable of cooperating with the Cosmos in harmony.³¹

The perception of what is small is (the secret of clear-sightedness; the guarding of what is soft and tender is (the secret of) strength. Who uses well his light, Reverting to its (source so) bright, Will from his body ward all blight, And hides the unchanging from men's sight. (Laozi)

Reflective Questions

1. Why do we consider the expansion of the homo oeconomicus approach important for the creation of a sustainable economic and social model?
2. Why has it become inevitable to create a new concept of existence?
3. How is this new concept of existence connected to the consciousness and identity of the homo oeconomicus?
4. How can we reinterpret the criterion of usefulness in a space-time structure that is not independent of the subject?
5. What importance does the improvement of the presencing ability have in the context of organizational development?

²⁹In essence, the result of the consciousness change can be associated with what professional literature refers to as “syntegration”, i.e. the mapping of a group process built on cooperation as a positive externality at the level of society.

³⁰“The Ten Oxherding Pictures”, translated by D. T. Suzuki, in *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1934. London: Rider & Company, 1950, New York: Grove Press, 1960, pp. 150–171. Paintings traditionally attributed to Tenshō Shūbun (1414–1463), ten circular paintings mounted as a handscroll, ink and light colour on paper, Muromachi period, late fifteenth century (32 × 181.5 cm), Shōkokuji temple, Kyoto.

See: <http://terebeess.hu/english/oxherd.html> and <http://terebeess.hu/english/Kuoan1.html>

³¹There are several interpretations of this fable. With the desire to aim higher than simply offering a performative interpretation driven by reason, in this study we will forbear from the intellectual capturing of the message—giving everyone the opportunity to lose themselves in the fable. Performativity can appear in the realities of recipients' spiritual experiences only as a potentiality and, hence, collective intelligence can begin to manifest itself in a higher quality.

6. And how can the ancient teaching of The Ten Oxherding help us here?

Note: The Ten Oxherding Pictures, without any explanations, the Zen fable in which man, searching for himself, may arrive at the self-essence who can devote his life to creating welfare for all sentient beings. Personally walking the entire route of spiritual development, the individual may experience the harmony in the system of relations between the whole and the part, in which his acts become real existence-creating acts. The route to enlightenment that serves others' happiness can also be conceived as a real, sustainable development concept.

References

- Capra, F. (1990). *The tao of physics*. London: Fontana. Chapter backs.
- Ce, L. (1993). *Életbölcességek: Tao-Te King* (J. Legge, Trans.). Budapest: Farkas Lőrinc Imre Kiadó (Laozi: Tao Te Ching).
- Gellner, E. (1974). *Legitimation of belief*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Goleman, D. (2011). *Leadership: The power of emotional intelligence*. Northampton, MA: More than Sound.
- Heidegger, M. (1992). *Az idő fogalma*. Budapest: Kossuth.
- Heidegger, M. (2001). *Let es idő*. Budapest: Osiris.
- Horányi, K. (2006). *Életfilozófia*. Budapest: Mérték.
- Kaufmann, E. M. (2000). *Sokrates*. München: DTV Verlag.
- Lovász, Á. (2015, March 20). *A postmodern állapot mint szkeptikus filozófia*. <http://veneratio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Lyotard-A-posztmodern-%C3%A1llapot-mint-szkeptikus-filoz%C3%B3fia.pdf>, <http://terebe.hu/english/oxherd.html>
- Lyotard, J. F. (1984). *The postmodern condition. A report on knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Major, G. (2004). Megérintható-e a szivárvány? (Can we touch a rainbow?). *eVilág*, 3(6), 13–19.
- Márfai Molnár, L. (2005). Túl a szubjektumon, avagy a transzcendentált téridő. In *Metaelmélet, metafilozófi* (pp. 170–183). Varga: Stratégiakutató Intézet.
- Mehra, J. (Ed.). (1973). *The physicist's conception of nature*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co.
- Needham, J. (1956). *Science and civilisation in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Senge, P., Scharmer, C. O., Jaworski, J., & Flowers, B. S. (2005). *Presence: An exploration of profound change in people, organizations, and society*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Sütő, Z. (2005). *Paradigma*. Budapest: Püski.
- Suzuki, D. T. (1960). *Manual of zen buddhism*. New York: Grove Press.
- Vankó, G. (1976). *Örvénygyökér*. Újvidék: Forum Könyvkiadó.
- Wilson, E. O. (1998). *Consilience. The unity of human knowledge*. New York: Alfred O. Knopf.
- Zsolnai, L. (2001). *Ökológia, gazdaság, etika*. Budapest: Helikon.

Gyöngyi Major is an associate professor, has a Ph.D. in economic science and is a member of the Public Body of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She was a collaborator at the Institute of Economic Sciences in Belgrade and the Institute for Strategic Research in Budapest, as well as a member of several international projects. At present, she is working on establishing a research institute to be headquartered in Budapest under the name “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Female Research Projects”. She investigates human development and man's cosmic identity. In her spare time, she studies the history of art and the Egyptian and Hindi language.

The Use of Mindfulness in a Traumatic VUCA World

Bronwen Rees

'The universal truths that were developed thousands of years ago are as timeless and true and profound as ever but there is a new evolution happening and the question is how we arrive at Mindfulness and wisdom in the context of our contemporary age'

'... because of the unparalleled connectivity, science and the insight that we have... [that's] why you're seeing the popularity of things like Mindfulness at a place like Google. Quite simply... we have an evidence-based form of mental conditioning that promotes well-being, calmness, clarity, insight, innovation, compassion. There's lots of science now that irrefutably says this is beneficial on multiple fronts.'
(Rich Fernandez, Formerly Senior People Development Lead at Google, interview with author, 2013)

The characteristics of this world, according to Johansen and Euchner (2013) are that:

It's volatile, it's unstructured, it's complex and it's ambiguous. . . . By definition, in a VUCA world, if you're not confused, you're not paying attention. Confusion is part of the game. And actually being frightened is part of the game too. But you cannot stay frightened, or you will freeze and lose the game. You've got to have readiness and that requires lots of practice. You have to figure out how to engage with that confusion, engage with that fear, and flip that into an opportunity. . . . The ultimate dilemma is to take the VUCA world and change it from a threatening thing, which it certainly is, into a world that is not only threatening but also laden with opportunity.

This is a far cry from the vision of the well-ordered organization that had developed by the end of the millennium. Such an organization was dominated by performance

B. Rees (✉)
Founder Incubatio, Thatched Cottage, Sudbury, UK
e-mail: dr.bronwenrees@gmail.com

management systems, wherein everyone knew their job minute by minute. However, these have evolved into the current conditions which resemble more those of on-going trauma situations. Within these conditions, the ancient practice of Mindfulness is becoming popular as a technique or tool for leading and for self-managing. It is currently used in the public sector such as Google and London Transport, and in the health service where it has become in some places an underlying method for both clinical and organizational interventions.

Whilst there is much evidence to back up the efficacy of Mindfulness for individuals in aggregated quantitative data, there is little evidence to illuminate the actual processes and workings of Mindfulness within the organizational context. Knowledge of these processes would help refine the type and scope of interventions necessary in different contexts. This article shows how the conditions of VUCA can be compared with those of trauma, which if not acknowledged can have a damaging physiological, emotional and spiritual impact. It describes how Mindfulness practices override these consequences through the process of slowing down the physiological responses and providing space for more creative responses. It then uses secondary data analysis of an evaluative project on Mindfulness in the mental health sector to present qualitative accounts of how Mindfulness supports employee self-management within these particular conditions of a VUCA environment—illuminating why and how these techniques are successful. The article concludes by discussing the ethical issues of introducing Mindfulness into organizations as part of the management agenda.

1 The Relationship Between VUCA, Trauma and Mindfulness

Origins of a VUCA World

The notion of VUCA was introduced by the US Army War College to describe the more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, multilateral world that resulted from the end of the Cold War (Kinsinger and Walch 2012). The acronym itself was not created until the late 1990s, and it was not until the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that the notion really took hold. VUCA was subsequently adopted by strategic business leaders to describe the chaotic, turbulent, and rapidly changing business environment. The financial crisis of 2008–2009, for example, rendered many business models obsolete, as organizations throughout the world were plunged into turbulent environments similar to those faced by the military. At the same time, technological developments such as social media exploded, and whilst the world's population continued to simultaneously grow and age, global disasters disrupted lives, economies, and businesses. One of the most alarming characteristics of this period was the exponential growth of mental health issues. For example, in 2013 one in four adults in the UK was diagnosed with a recognizable mental health illness.

These conditions are taxing even the most able of leaders who may find their skills growing obsolete as quickly as their organizations change in this volatile, unpredictable landscape. Leadership agility and adaptability are now required skills

if organizations are to succeed in this VUCA world. As Horney, Pasmore, and O'Shea (2010) note, to succeed, 'leaders must make continuous shifts in people, process, technology, and structure. This requires flexibility and quickness in decision making.' (Horney et al. 2010).

Whilst much of the literature of the VUCA world is aimed at the opportunities that leaders may take, little attention is paid to the long-term consequences of working in such conditions for employees. The business world can feel literally like a battlefield and in this respect can be considered to resemble the on-going conditions of trauma.

2 The Relationship of VUCA to Trauma

Trauma studies have had a checkered history. Herman (1992) notes that in the last century, knowledge of the effects of trauma twice surfaced in public consciousness, and then were lost again. In the first instance, the study of 'hysteria' emerged with the work of Freud who noticed a connection between psychiatric history, and sexually molested women—though he later suggested that this was mere fantasy that resulted in the study going underground. The second major emergence of trauma was after the First and Second World Wars, with 'shell shock' in World War I and 'combat fatigue' or 'combat neurosis' in World War II. Whilst the effects of long-term violence was recognized, it was still considered at this time to be a weakness on behalf of the soldier.

Not until the problems of Vietnam veterans came into focus, did the reality of violence, and its long-term effects if not treated, become acknowledged. In 1980, the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD entered the formal psychiatric tradition through its inclusion in the *Diagnostic and Statistic Manual* (Bloom 1997). If the consequences of experiencing trauma events are not acknowledged and released, then the person is liable to suffer on-going mental, physical and emotional suffering—and above all to feel isolated and further locked into a trauma cycle (Rees and Smith 2008). A traumatic situation is one in which the life of a system is under threat. The natural physiological response to life-threatening experience shared by animals and humans is the fight or flight mechanism. This mechanism is not a planned, deliberately thought-out reaction, but a rapid-fire, automatic, total body response. It goes through various stages and, under natural conditions in the animal world, it provides a life-saving, or pain- saving mechanism.

Let us take the example of an antelope feeding on the plains of Africa (Sills 2003). In this state, the antelope is said to be in the ideal state. If it is threatened by danger, such as a lion, then its body moves into an active alert state. If this danger increases, then the fight or flight response kicks in. The antelope's sympathetic nervous system will surge: it becomes flooded with chemicals which override the immune and cognitive system. This is the mobilization response. The antelope flees. If it escapes, a further flood of endorphins may arise, and it will slow down and resume its grazing. If the danger increases, the parasympathetic nervous system

comes into action and takes over from the sympathetic nervous system, and other neuro-hormones are released. The antelope will suddenly collapse and become immobilized. Now both nervous systems are surging, and the energy from the sympathetic nervous system, which cannot be expressed in flight literally implodes inwards, and keeps cycling. Either at this point the lion will go away thinking its prey is dead, or if it is eaten, then the antelope is spared the pain of death as it is frozen. If the antelope is not eaten, then, the antelope will get up again, and buck to and fro, as it releases the increased hormones from its system. It clears the cycling energies by action, shifting from a frozen state to an expression of its defensive energies. The antelope has survived, come successfully out of shock, and discharged the imploding energies.

Human beings have the same response but are often not as successful in processing traumatic experience as other mammals. This is due to the complexity of the nervous system and the thinking mind coming in too quickly, shutting down the physiological responses, and leaving the effects unprocessed. This means that the human will still retain the effects of the event in its system, and can be in a continuous, lowered state of anxiety, which can be easily triggered. The consequences of this can be on-going mental health issues that may arise as stress, addiction, depression.

Johansen mentions the fight and flight response as being a necessary part of the VUCA conditions. However, this is often not acknowledged for the employees, but rather as a problem for leadership. In fact, there is an additional layer of threat for employees since they are subject to pressures from management, and the customer or task. Very often they may well have accountability and not responsibility. Thus performance management systems demand that certain tasks are carried out within rigid, yet unreal conditions. This puts the employee in a trauma situation as their livelihood (thus survival) may depend on an impossible situation. Given the highly individualized nature of the work environment, the employee will feel isolated and threatened, and unable to find any support—another condition of stress.

The individual will feel increasingly alienated from a clear focus and picture of reality, and may mistakenly perceive danger even when it is not present, leading to overreaction, or frozenness. He or she is unable to view the ‘bigger picture’ and stand back from the situation to find a creative response to the conditions. A trauma cycle has set in.

The ancient Buddhist practice of Mindfulness, however, coming from a deep understanding of the relationship between body and mind, can help slow down the bodily processes to help release the chemicals from the body, and allow space for a more spacious response to arise. If learnt, then it may be possible that increased Mindfulness can transform the VUCA conditions into those of opportunity. As several commentators have noted, when this happens then:

- Volatility can lead to vision
- Uncertainty leads to understanding
- Complexity leads to clarity
- Ambiguity lead to agility

3 The Buddhist Origins of Mindfulness

The origins of Mindfulness lie in the very early Pali canon texts, and were based upon the teachings of the Buddha, around 500 BC. The most fundamental text relating to Mindfulness is the ‘The Foundations of Mindfulness’ (Nanoli and Bodhi 1995). The four foundations of Mindfulness are the Mindfulness of the body, Mindfulness of emotions, Mindfulness of thoughts, and Mindfulness of the nature of reality.

According to a Buddhist view of reality, everything is in a state of flux—even the human being. The Buddhist understanding of ‘personality’ is based upon the notion of an ‘arising process’. In this way, Buddhism considers the ‘self’ to be an open system, taking in nourishment or toxins from the environment and recycling it through the body. The human being is a set of ‘heaps’ called the five skandhas—form, sensation, perception, mental formations, consciousness—which are said to arise virtually at the same time. Through meditation, the Buddhist practitioner learns to distinguish these different ‘heaps’ as they arise, and can thus gain freedom from a fixed state of habitual responses to the environment.

This process is true not only of individuals, but also of organizations. Scaled up to organizational level, Senge and his colleagues (2004) point to the dangers of limiting management to fixed habits: ‘As long as our thinking is governed by habit—notably by industrial, “machine age” concepts such as control, predictability, standardization, and “faster is better”—we will continue to recreate institutions as they have been, despite their disharmony with the larger world, and the need of all living systems to evolve.’ (Senge et al. 2004, p. 9)

4 The Basics of Mindfulness Practice and Its Relationship to Trauma

A simple mindful practice means that effort is applied to examining thoughts, emotions and actions as they arise. For this the practitioner learns to slow down the constant responses to external input as mediated through the senses, and turn their attention inwards to the more subtle body and mind processes. Often the breath is used as an object of concentration as it enters and leaves the body.

This inner examination leads the practitioner to understand the extremely subtle relationships between these different processes. Thus, body and mind processes, such as breathing, or blood flow, which in evolutionary terms have become unconscious, become the object of attention and thus available for conscious attention if necessary. Another way of putting this, is that the practitioner is learning how to control and master the physiological processes that occur between the brain and the nervous system (Haule 2011). Over time, the practitioner will become aware of the constant flowing of the arising processes, and advanced practitioners may control bodily processes such as the breath for long periods of time. They are able to reach altered states of consciousness by balancing the relationship between the parasympathetic and sympathetic aspects of the nervous system. This has been can be described as ‘tuning the autonomic nervous system’ (Haule 2011).

We saw earlier how trauma cycles set in when the trauma from the life-threatening event is not released, and how if this continues, it becomes a way of life, ultimately leading to mental health problems such as PTSD, addiction, depression—and is characterized by an individual being in constant fight and flight and unable to perceive reality accurately.

As we have seen, an advanced practitioner has mastery over the function of the nervous system, but even a limited practice, can help an individual release trauma from their system, and prevent a further escalation of the situation. Thus Mindfulness can be used to address the pathological consequences of trauma, and also to serve as a daily practice for preventing this arising. Its efficacy can be seen in the number of different trainings used in different contexts either as a depth psychotherapy practice (as taught in the Karuna Institute in Devon, the first Mindfulness-based psychotherapy) or as a simple 8-week course for help in dealing with the overwhelming conditions in which humanity finds itself.

5 The Origins of Mindfulness Practice in the West and Its Use in Organizations

Buddhism came first to the UK at around the turn of the century, introduced with all the cultural and religious accretions, so was of interest only for the esoteric few. The influx of eastern Buddhist teachers, such as Tibetan lamas like Tarthang Tulku or the Vietnamese Thich Nath Hanh had a profound influence on the uptake of Buddhist practices. In the 60s and 70s, Eastern and Western pioneers set up their own movements or Buddhist groups.

The explicit development of Mindfulness, decontextualized from its Buddhist origins, which forms the basis of much of its manifestation in businesses, was pioneered through the work of Jon Kabat Zin, and others (e.g. Kabat Zinn 1990, 1994). The number of citations of scientific chapters using the term ‘Mindfulness’ increased exponentially, from 2 in 1982, to 48 in 2007 (Didonna 2009).

Over the past decade there has been a proliferation of research on Mindfulness techniques and its role in supporting different aspects of organizational life. For example, Mindfulness has been discussed in the area of adaptive learning, and has been seen as crucial to pro-actively establishing a flexible range of behaviors (Fiol and O’Connor 2003; Levinthal and Rerup 2006) or clarifying where ‘organizational Mindfulness’ and ‘mindful organizing’ are most important (Vogus and Sutcliffe 2012). Dane and Brummel (2014) find support for a positive relationship between workplace Mindfulness and job performance. Weick has pushed the idea in another direction by linking it with wisdom and the ability to focus attention on present details, without being dependent on categories, codes, or encoding processes (so called ‘non-conceptual Mindfulness’; Weick and Putnam 2006; Weick and Sutcliffe 2006). In 2013, the book ‘Inner Peace—Global Impact’ with numerous articles on the use of mindful practices in business was successfully launched to over 200 practitioners at the Academy of Management (Schulyer 2012).

6 The Study

Using data from an evaluative report of a pilot project carried out in a large Mental Health trust in the UK, this study outlines how Mindfulness enabled employees to cope with the VUCA conditions.

6.1 Background: The Rationale

At the time (2013) the Trust was facing acute public sector cuts and increasing demand with a governmental challenge to improve quality of patient care. In response to this challenge the new management team and the turnaround board thought to do this through the introduction of Mindfulness to the Trust employees. Thus, in 2012, Dr. Attila Vegh, then Chief Executive Officer, commissioned a pilot Mindfulness program within the Trust. The idea was first of all to test the delivery and openness at a small scale and to evaluate its potential efficacy if rolled out throughout the entire Trust.

Mindfulness was offered as a development opportunity to staff as a ‘work tool’ rather than a therapeutic intervention. Of two generic programs often offered within the NHS and other organizations, Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction developed by the Jon Kabat Zinn Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (Kabat Zinn 1990, 1994), and Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy developed by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams and John Teasdale in Oxford, the latter was chosen, as the outcomes desired were wider than ‘stress relief’. It consisted of an 8-week program of 2 hours per week in groups with additional practice to be done at home following the Williams textbook (Williams and Penman 2011).

6.2 Recruitment Process

Around 75 applications were received for the 34 available places. Consideration was given to group dynamics, ensuring that line managers were not attending with direct reports and vice versa, and there was a good mix of departments and job functions.

This article draws upon the qualitative responses of the participants to the program derived from:

1. Open-ended qualitative questionnaire administered by hand to all participants at the end of their sessions
2. 30 minutes discussion with participants
3. Focus group with self-selecting participants taking place 6 weeks after the end of the course.

7 Findings and Analysis

The responses have been clustered according to which of the VUCA conditions were best described by the participants, and how Mindfulness helped turn the conditions into those of growth rather than limitations.

7.1 Working with Volatility Leading to Vision

Volatility describes the highly stressed and unpredictable situations that employers and employees need to meet. In order for this to be transformed to vision, this would require individuals to find a way of standing back from the situation, and creating space for a measured response so that situations do not become more enflamed and creative responses can be found. Mindfulness in this instance is used to control the emotional response before it triggers the situation further. This way, the trauma response that may be triggered can be slowed down, and the individual would return to a steady state and find an alternative, creative response. The following reflections show how the participants succeeded in doing this.

Last week when I returned from a home visit, I was informed by the team secretary that due to a new member of our team only working Tues/Thurs, she had un-booked my clinic space so that this staff member could use the space instead (I only work 3 days myself). In the past this would have been like showing a red rag to a bull. Instead I took a mindful pause, walked out of her office and did not say anything. A complete change in behavior and thinking process for me. No damage to the working relationship!

Yesterday a colleague was under a lot of stress and was expressing her unhappiness about a situation in the main office. A close professional colleague was being bad mouthed and I was finding the situation uncomfortable. Rather than be consumed with negative thoughts, I took myself out of the office and went for a mindful walk around the car park for 5 min. I came back into the office more prepared to manage the situation that was transpiring. I found myself more able to support the colleague who was stressed and I also thought of her in my befriending exercise last night—leading to a better working relationship today.

I am able to focus on my responsibilities and see the bigger picture more clearly. I am less likely to take on others problems as my own. My work life balance has improved (mentally). I feel I have more control and power in the work environment—at least over myself and how I chose to respond to situations—both difficulties and successes.

Yes, I work with a colleague who can sometimes be difficult to deal with as she has a bit of a short fuse and does sometimes say inappropriate things. I have learnt how to be calmer around her and therefore I do not feel so agitated towards her. This has improved our working relationship together.

...in recent years pressure to do very solution-focused assessments with rigid time restraints have become the norm. In being more relaxed in just accepting of my own problems I have been able to do this with service users and contrary to my expectations I have found that my assessments do not last longer and I feel that they are more effective and also therapeutic (I work in A and E assessing people in mental health crisis).

7.2 Working with Uncertainty Leading to Understanding

Within the mental health trust, uncertainty is the order of the day. Not only is there the usual uncertainty that arises from having to meet exacting managerial standards, but the patients themselves daily present different challenges. Each of these demands a new or different response to aid them in their recovery. In the VUCA world, it is said that uncertainty can lead to understanding, and the following comments reveal how participants have learnt how to understand themselves and the situation, taking the danger of overwhelm away.

I have felt more accepting of myself and able to contain doubts and uncertainties so that I can be more present during clinical meetings with service users and see things more as they are rather than colored by how I might expect them to be. I have experienced more satisfaction, interest and curiosity in my work.

I have noticed I can listen to others and better hear and understand what they are saying. Colleagues have remarked on this also.

My relationship with my work has improved as through the Mindfulness I have realized that I have a choice about how I approach work. For some months I have been unhappy at work which has led to negative spiral of unhelpful thoughts. The Mindfulness has helped me approach this difficulty and to be able to deal with work more positively. This has had a direct impact on work relationships with colleagues in the shared office space and with staff that I line manage. I now feel that I am regaining being able to lead with hope.

7.3 Working with Complexity Leading to Clarity

This environment is characterized by complexity; complexity of roles, complexity of clients, complexity of relationships. This can lead to overwhelm, and inability to prioritize. Some of the comments showed just how much Mindfulness created the space for the right action for both the individual, and hence the situation to be chosen. Participants also commented how Mindfulness helped them create more focus, and hence create the necessary simplicity for themselves. The following comments show how the Mindful practice has helped clear the emotional overwhelm, and aid participants in getting more focus to their work.

Anticipating that a call to a patient, GP or colleague is likely to be complex—I used short Mindfulness exercises beforehand and felt a lot calmer, less anxious, more able to actively listen and not pre-judge.

Taking the three minutes of Mindfulness break away from my job gave me a new focus when I returned to situations.

I have more focus, less panic at referrals piling-up.

Responding to email I've been able to deal with them more effectively by approaching rather than avoiding them.

Since practicing the exercises on a regular basis and choosing to see my thoughts as mental processes, I am far less stressed. I am approaching work more pragmatically and I am no longer dreading coming into work.

Not trying to multi-task quite so much, so able to complete tasks better and realizing that being able to complete a task myself is more satisfying.

I attend to tasks singly and similar to the beginning of the week, feeling panicky and stressed thinking about all the tasks ahead, but now I reflect at the end of the week on all I have completed and feel reassured.

I am less prone to avoid/procrastinate when there are specific pieces of work that need to be done, especially when it comes to writing reports etc. I am more mindful of my difficulties at times in focusing my concentration (partly because of anxiety of what I should be doing) and thereby I think I'm becoming (slowly) more efficient in my new role.

I prioritize my workload much more efficiently and spend much less time worrying about or attending to things I don't need to.

7.4 Working with Ambiguity Leading to Agility

Because of the very challenging nature of the environment, keeping to certain roles or job titles is often difficult, and may suppress what could be a common sense response. Employees can feel caught between two rocks—of managerial demands and with the human suffering that is presented before them. This can lead to extreme stress and dysfunction, but many of the respondents showed that Mindfulness helped them create a bigger perspective from which to make decisions and take action, and therefore to create a greater variety of responses and agility.

I feel a lot less stressed by difficult situations at work and can therefore deal with them better. I am also enjoying work and the interactions with colleagues more. But mainly it has helped me to think more clearly at work.

I feel I now view my colleagues as more equal, not so much as a 'job title' but more as human beings working on the same team for the same result'... Also—because the Trust has acknowledged our need for mental health support—having the course at all helped me to feel more of a person at work and not just an employee. I assume much less about what my colleagues think or do now—I ask more. I also feel less stressed when people ask me to do things—not seeing it as such an imposition on my time. I say 'no' more, when appropriate, and I give more realistic timeframes to people for completing a task when I agree to do it.

I work in a very stressful environment and I have become more conscious about how this impacts my physical state—the important of listening to my internal cues taking breaks etc. It has also improved my 'situational awareness' of where I work so that I do not act on auto

pilot and am more compassionate to others. At times I had found, (prior to the course) that I could ignore patients who I was not working with or had any responsibility for, and something which when I first started working, I would never have done. During the Mindfulness course I became more aware of those around me rather than just rushing in blinkered.

8 Discussion

Overall, even after just 8 weeks, participants reported that their lives had improved significantly, and most were continuing the practice even beyond the program. Employees of the trust met the on-going VUCA conditions both in the working environment, and with the clients with and for whom they work. Trauma is not merely an individual phenomenon; it is social and is transmitted through emotional relationship. In order to protect from trauma, people will shut down emotionally leading to lack of empathy and care, and creates a vicious cycle (Rees and Smith 2008). As we have seen, in conditions of trauma, the emotional and rational neural pathways are bypassed, and people move into automatic pilot. The VUCA world is characterized by these life-threatening situations, where the organization is itself under threat.

From the responses in the discussion groups, the focus group, and the questionnaires, these conditions were described, but all of them demonstrated multiple instances where even a short training of Mindfulness, supported them in breaking this cycle by creating spaces to recognize and connect with their emotions, and to take the space to reflect on what was happening. It enabled them to take the necessary steps to understand that the problems that they were facing were collective, and to find ways of communicating with colleagues, even those who had not done the training, that did not enflame the situation further.

Many of them cited how they gained broader awareness and more focus which enabled them to set more realistic goals and not to become stressed if they were unable to meet them. Thus they were not driven automatically by the situation but were able to take stock and react more appropriately. It gave them broader awareness and greater focus, and at an individual level, enhanced well-being and increasing job satisfaction and motivation. Many reported having a bigger perspective, and being able to take in far more of the conditions and react with greater choice. For all of these, employees showed the ability to change the conditions from to that of vision, understanding, clarity and agility. Even within an 8-week programme, participants made significant progress in learning Mindfulness and using it to benefit both their individual and organisational lives.

9 The Ethics of Mindfulness

From my own experience of both introducing Mindfulness into organizations and evaluating the above project, I have been aware of the potential dangers of the misuse of Mindfulness in organizations. With the exponential expansion of its use, it does run the danger, when divorced from its ethical framework, of becoming co-opted into the corporate agenda. Purser and Loy (2013) suggest that one of the problems with Mindfulness, is that the basic question, ‘Why is there so much stress in organizations?’ is avoided and conclude that: ‘To become a genuine force for positive personal and social transformation, it must reclaim an ethical framework and aspire to more lofty purposes that take into account the well-being of all living beings.’ Purser and Milillo (2015) argue that ‘a denatured Mindfulness divorced from its soteriological context reduces it to a self-help technique that is easily misappropriated for reproducing corporate and institutional power, employee pacification, and maintenance of toxic organizational cultures’.

In my own early work of introducing Mindfulness into organizations, my team of meditation practitioners were well aware of the potentially radical nature of the work. Indeed our hypothesis was that Mindfulness could help break through power relations (Rees 2012). Our response was to create a process called ‘ethical inquiry’ in which the Mindfulness program was supported by collective Mindfulness-based action research groups. This problem to a degree was encountered in this environment too, but helped by the fact that the CEO himself took part in the Mindfulness programs. However, the evidence here from this program certainly showed that the work did not co-opt people into unethical behavior, but rather offered the tools for self-empowerment. Furthermore, the cross-role nature of the groups meant that work problems were shared, and this proved very valuable so that employees did not feel isolated, and were able to share their experiences of working in VUCA environments. The power of Mindfulness is such that it potentially gives the employee the tools for reducing their own physiological responses, and creating choices in their own lives—whether that is a choice to leave the organization. What employees chose to do after following a course of Mindfulness meditation was a question of their responsibility—and the Mindfulness program provided them with the tools to make choices about this.

10 Conclusion

This article has shown how Mindfulness programs, even when divorced from their ethical roots, can enable individuals—whatever their role or position in an organization, to manage themselves and the chaos they encounter to take a larger perspective on their work and lives. Given the inherent nature of the Mindfulness approach, this could only enhance their own lives, and the choices they make within it. By its very nature, scaled up to the organization—it would seem that Mindfulness provides both individual and organizational support for meeting the

potential trauma of the VUCA conditions, and turning its threatening nature into one of collective spontaneity and creativity.

Reflective Questions

1. Some reflective questions that we have explored in this account, but which would require further research in different contexts would be:
2. How could Mindfulness be implemented across an entire organization?
3. What might be the ethical implications if this were imposed from the leadership without them partaking?
4. How could we ensure the soundness of the delivery of Mindfulness?
5. Are employees likely to leave the organization after developing their own practice of Mindfulness?

References

- Bloom, S. (1997). *Creating sanctuary: Toward an evolution of sane societies*. New York: Routledge.
- Dane, E., & Brummel, B. (2014). Examining workplace mindfulness and its relations to job performance and turnover intention. *Human Relations*, 67(1), 105–128.
- Didonna, F. (2009). *Clinical handbook of mindfulness*. New York: Springer Verlag.
- Fernandez, R. (2013). Wisdom and mindfulness as tools of organizational practice at Google. Interview with B Rees. *Interconnections*, (9), 49–61.
- Fiol, C. M., & O'Connor, E. J. (2003). Waking up! Mindfulness in the face of bandwagons. *Academy of Management Review*, 28(1), 54–70.
- Haule, J. R. (2011). *Jung in the 21st century, Vol. 2: Synchronicity and science*. Sussex: Routledge.
- Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: From domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books.
- Horney, N., Pasmore, B., & O'Shea, T. (2010). Leadership agility: A business imperative for a VUCA world. *People & Strategy*, 33(4), 32.
- Johansen, B., & Euchner, E. (2013). Navigating the VUCA world. *Research-Technology Management*, 56(1), 10–15.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. New York: Dell Publishing.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion.
- Levinthal, D., & Rerup, C. (2006). Crossing an apparent chasm: Bridging mindful and less-mindful perspectives on organizational learning. *Organization Science*, 17(4), 502–513.
- Nanamoli and Bodhi. (Trans.). (1995). Satipatthana sutta. In *The middle length discourses of the Buddha*. New York: Wisdom Publications.
- Purser, R., & Loy, D. (2013). Beyond McMindfulness. *The Huffington Post*.
- Purser, R., & Milillo, J. (2015). Mindfulness revisited: A Buddhist-based conceptualization. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 24(1), 3–24.
- Rees, B. (2012). East meets West: The development and methods of crucible research. In K. Schuyler (Ed.), *Inner peace, global impact*. North Carolina: Information Age Publishing.
- Rees, B., & Smith, J. (2008). Breaking the cycle: The traumatic cycle of policing. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, 10(3), 267–279.
- Schulyer, K. (Ed.). (2012). *Inner peace-global impact: Tibetan buddhism, leadership and work*. North Carolina: Information Age Publishing.

- Senge, P., Scharmer, C., Jaworski, J., & Flowers, B. (2004). *Presence: Exploring profound change in people, organizations, and society*. New York: Doubleday.
- Sills, F. (2003). *Core process trauma (booklet)*. Devon: Karuna Institute.
- Vogus, T. J., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2012). Organizational mindfulness and mindful organizing: A reconciliation and path forward. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 11*(4), 722–735.
- Weick, K., & Putnam, T. (2006). Organizing for mindfulness. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 15* (3), 275–287.
- Weick, K., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2006). Mindfulness and the quality of organizational attention. *Organizational Science, 17*(4), 514.
- Williams, M., & Penman, D. (2011). *Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world*. London: Little Brown.

Web Pages

- Kingsinger, P., & Walch, K. (2012, July 9). *Living and leading in a VUCA world*. Thunderbird University. Retrieved from <http://knowledgegenetwork.thunderbird.edu/research/2012/07/09/kingsinger-walch-VUCA/>

Bronwen Rees was formerly Director of the Centre for Transformational Management at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge where she led a team of researchers and practitioners introducing meditational approaches into business and education and created the journal *Interconnections*. She is also interested in the cross-over between new science and mindful practice, and how this can lead to the creation of sustainable organisations. She now runs her own consultancy, *Incubatio*, which devises mindfulness-based programmes and evaluations for organizations. In addition, she works as a mindfulness-based psychotherapist with a busy practice in Cambridge and Suffolk, and is Programme Lead and Tutor for Matrix College. She often leads retreats and workshops both in the UK and internationally and has published widely. She gives talks on her integrative work, including the Cambridge Festival of Ideas, the Canadian Bloom Sustainability conference, and an interview with the BBC World Service. Web page: www.incubatio.co.uk

Part IV

Integrativeness

Spirituality in Management Education for Building Integrated Self: Insights from Sanskrit Scriptures

Pawan Kumar Singh

1 Introduction

In management education, issues of self-management, interpersonal and group effectiveness, and organizational effectiveness are dealt under the subject of Organizational Behavior (OB). The three dimensions—the self, relationship with others, and organizational level issues influence one another. They can be depicted as framework shown in this section on the following page.

The self-people-organization triangle has various implications. The vertex of ‘self’ deals with managing self through understanding of values, attitudes, emotions, perception, personality, motivation etc. The vertex of ‘people’ deals with interpersonal effectiveness, group dynamics, team building and leadership, power and politics, conflict management etc. The vertex of ‘organization’ deals with organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational change etc. The interaction between the vertices of ‘self’ and ‘people’ creates relational effectiveness, the interaction between the vertices of ‘self’ and ‘organization’ creates role effectiveness, and interaction with the vertices of ‘people’ and ‘organization’ creates process effectiveness.

Based on the framework as mentioned in Fig. 1, Organizational Behavior, apart from discussion on self, people (group), and organization, talks about self-people interaction, self-organization interaction, and people-organization interaction. Now let us have a look at the organization behavior in management education (See Table 1). The part of Organizational Behavior that deals in ‘self’ is focal point of this chapter. The concern is that the ‘self’ is the basic unit of the subject of Organizational Behavior hence it needs superior attention both in terms of quantity and quality. The pedagogy that deals with group and organization may not be

P.K. Singh (✉)

Indian Institute of Management Indore, Prabandh Shikhar, Rau-Pithampur Road, Indore 453556, Madhya Pradesh, India

e-mail: pawan@iimdr.ac.in

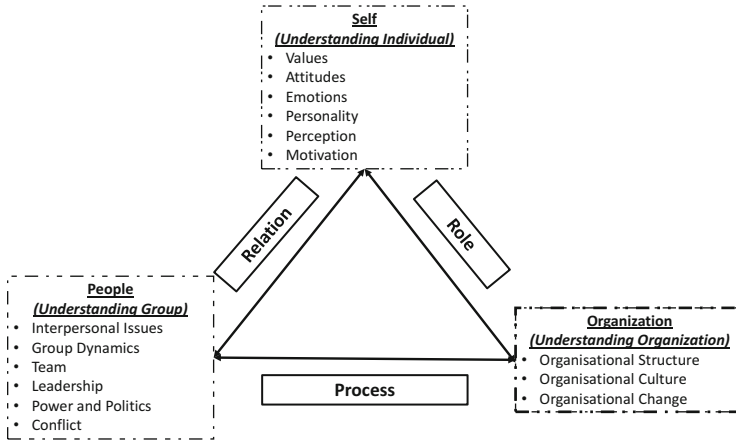


Fig. 1 Self-people-organization triangle

effective while dealing with 'self'. It appears that without rejuvenating the 'self' properly, Organizational Behavior hastes into dealing with issues concerned with person as well as organization. The pedagogy that is mainly focusing on extrovert-ness, thinking, analysis, or empiricism and undermines attention to introvert-ness, feeling, synthesis, and experiential learning may not be able to prepare appropriately individuals to respond to the VUCA world. There are mainly two issues at this point of discussion: what content should be included to build integrated self, and what should be added to pedagogy/andragogy to internalize the discussion on 'self'.

This chapter emphasizes on three main issues: relation with self, relation with others, and relation with work (karma). Organizational Behavior deals at three levels mainly: intrapersonal, interpersonal and group, and organizational. This chapter duly emphasizes the first two levels i.e. intrapersonal and interpersonal as well as group level interactions. The third level i.e. organizational level is dealt from a different angle—the angle of relationship of self with the work, and perception of self about the relationship of others with work.

Effective management by an individual manager requires self-management as stepping stone. Self-management can also be called as managing intrapersonal domain. Relation with self is concerned with developing integrated personality that is not only thinking-oriented but also feeling-oriented, not only extrovert but also introvert, not only masculine but also feminine, not only grabbing but also giving, not only expecting but also fulfilling, not only running but also relaxing, not only preparing to enjoy but also enjoying here and now, not only evaluating but also simply observing, not only planning to achieve but also accepting with grace what comes your way after putting your sincere efforts. In his own words, Prof. S.K. Chakraborty summarizes the whole process as journey from lower self to higher Self. The integrated personality remains devoid of self-doubting but remains alert in terms of Bhagavad-Gita, so that one is always marching on the path of self-development.

Table 1 Content, pedagogy, and outcomes in organizational behavior

Content	Pedagogy	Outcomes
Values and attitudes	Concepts, framework, empirical citation, case discussion	Understanding values and attitudes, its theories and workplace implication
Emotions	Concepts and model, empirical citation, case discussion, inventories	Understanding emotions and its workplace implication
Personality	Theories, frameworks, models, case discussion, inventories	Knowing the different types of personalities, analyzing which personality is suitable for which type of work or organization
Perception	Concepts, activities and guided readings	Understanding how a person possess perception and how it may get skewed
Motivation	Theories, frameworks, case discussion, inventories	Knowing various theories of motivation, to identify how to motivate others especially at work place
Group behavior	Theoretical framework, group activities and assignments, stories	Understanding the process of group formation and group outcome, to know how the organization can make groups more effective
Work teams	Theoretical framework, inventories and activities	Knowing various types of teams and their functions, understanding how the organization can be more effective by making appropriate teams
Leadership	Theories, inventories, real life stories, cases discussion	Knowing various theories and views about effective leadership
Power and politics	Theoretical framework, case discussion	Understanding the concept of power and politics and knowing the difference between healthy and unhealthy politics
Conflict	Theoretical framework, inventories, case discussion	Understanding process, types and levels of conflict, how conflict is good or bad for organization, methods to resolve conflict
Organization structure	Theoretical framework, case discussion	Knowing various organization structure prevailing and their merits and demerits
Organizational culture	Theoretical framework, inventories, case discussion	Understanding organization culture, different types of cultures existing and ways to improve it
Organizational change	Theoretical framework, case discussion	Knowing need and process of change

Effective interpersonal behavior not only demands assertiveness and good communication but empathy, compassion, and equanimity. Patanjali suggests the ways to deal with different persons differently by maintaining equanimity that is based not on absolute equality of behavior towards all, but by maintaining proportional equality of behavior. The scriptures like Upanishads, Samkhya, Vaisheshik, Yoga Sutra, Ramayana, and Mahabharata including Bhagavad Gita and Vidur Neeti, Yogvaashishtha, Smritis, Ashtaavakra Geeta, Tattwabodh, Vivek

Choodaamani, Bhartrihari Shatak, Shukra Neeti, Chanakya Sutra, Kathaasaritsaagar etc. suggest the mechanisms of effectiveness with the self as well as in interpersonal and group situations.

In order to be effective at work, the philosophy of work itself has to be properly imbibed. The very purpose of work, chemistry of effectiveness at work, appropriate choice of work, graceful acceptance of outcome of work, the impact of work on the self-have been very useful concepts in scriptures which are needed for modern-day managers. This particular aspect is almost neglected in formal management education leaving the learner as an individual that is susceptible to errors while facing challenges at work as well as in life. Of late tycoon like Ratan Tata is suggesting the would-be-managers and working managers to create a balance between work and life by having a proper understanding of purpose of work. Sanskrit scriptures challenge us to fine tune our understanding towards whether human being is for work, or work is for human being.

Let us see the scope of this chapter in the context of VUCA world. The present world is filled with Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA, an acronym popular since 1990s). Individuals are forced to struggle for making space for themselves. In many cases members in families and societies are consuming space meant for others, organizations are in fierce competition with one another to have their share and say, nations are often inconsiderate to immediate and distant neighbors, and many leaders often impose their egos leading to disastrous results in long run and so on.

Volatility can be understood at two levels, micro and macro. Micro level volatility is concerned with restlessness of individual. At macro level volatility signifies the transient nature of outward existence. Uncertainty at micro level means, an individual is doubtful about the whole situation. At macro level uncertainty means precariousness of the outward existence. Complexity at micro level means the psychical intricacy impeding clear decision making at individual level. At macro level, complexity means cumbersome mix of things in surroundings. Ambiguity at micro level means lack of clarity in thoughts, and at macro level it means the outward system marred by absence of sense of direction. This creates following matrix (Table 2):

This chapter limits its scope to address the issues in the column representing individual level concerns facing the VUCA world particularly in context of managerial domain. The focus of chapter is concerned with how an individual in managerial domain can be able to steer through in VUCA world through intervention of spirituality by focusing on four types of relationship particularly through insights provided in Sanskrit scriptures. These four types of relationship-orientation could help an individual to steer through the present phase of the world marred with restlessness, doubtfulness, psychical intricacy, and lack of clarity. The four types of relationship chosen for this article are:

- (a) Relationship (or connectedness) of the self with higher Self (Journey to Higher Self);
- (b) Relationship of self with the work (Work Ethics);

Table 2 Manifestation of VUCA factors at micro and macro levels

VUCA factors	Micro (individual level)	Macro (social level)
Volatility	Restlessness	Transience
Uncertainty	Doubtfulness	Precariousness
Complexity	Psychical intricacy	Cumbersome mix
Ambiguity	Lack of clarity	Directionlessness

- (c) Relationship of self with the others (Relationship Ethics);
 (d) Relationship of others with work as perceived by the self (Observation and Perception Ethics).

2 Building the Integrated Self

The basic framework of the chapter can be depicted in Fig. 2. Journey to Integrated Self (Higher Self as compared to lower self) is subject matter of Gyaan Yoga (Path of Knowledge) and Raaj Yoga (Path of Meditation). The journey from lower self to Higher Self has been described through Panch Kosha (five sheaths) (See Fig. 3),

Antahkaran Chatushtaya (four inner instruments—mind, intellect, psyche, and ego), Three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas), Duality versus Non-duality, and One Absolute Truth (religions are many but spirituality is one). Work Ethics has been described through Karma Yoga, Law of Karma, and Law of Nishkaam Karma. Relationship Ethics, close to Bhakti Yoga (Path of Compassion to People and Surrender to the Supreme), has been described through Ekaatmaanubhooti (oneness in all), Proportional Equity, and Empathy. Perception Ethics has been described through purifying the observations done by the self, so that a clear distinction may be done among the truth, false, facts, and myth.

A purified observation skill helps to make us capable to see the things as they are. How to see the things as they are is subject matter of combination of Gyaana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

Managers are continuously engaged in the business of decision making. For decision making participation of multiple stakeholders—both internal and external—is desirable but every contributor in the role of input provider or as an integrator of input is a subjective mind. Thus the quality of individual mind (s) engaged in decision making becomes significant determinant of quality decision. As the world badly needs quality decisions, so we need quality mind for a decision maker. Making endeavor for quality mind for self is an organizational as well as social responsibility. Let us explore what Sanskrit scriptures have to offer to enable us to make a continuous journey on the path of developing higher Self.

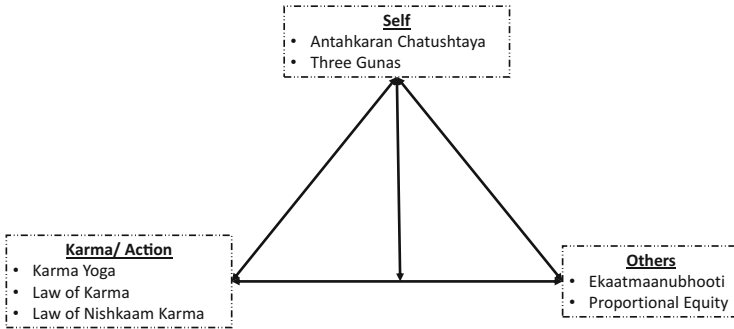


Fig. 2 Building the integrated self

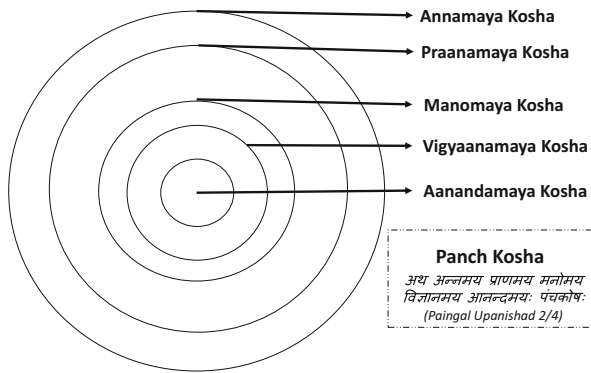


Fig. 3 Panch Kosha (five sheaths) of our existence

3 Six Impurities and Remedies

At the base, the psychic self is prone to get contaminated by six impurities. They are: Misplaced Desires (*Kaama*); Anger (*Krodha*); Greed (*Lobha*); Infatuation (*Moha*); Jealousy (*Matsar*), and Megalomaniac Ego (*Ahankaar*). For describing each of the impurities in the domain of managerial world, following examples may be given:

Misplaced Desires: There is no sense of fulfilment either while performing a work or after completion of a piece of work because joy of work is missing; if promoted there is poor sense of understanding of responsibilities attached to the position but hankering for yet higher promotion; purposeless accumulation with no sense of direction in life etc.

- *Anger*: Temperamental in nature; not able to understand others’ viewpoint; negative attitude with tendency to overpower others’ sense of self-esteem;

showing tantrum because one is possessing higher authority; poor psychosomatic balance etc.

- *Greed*: Tendency to sabotage what belong to others, either position or property, and trying to possess them etc.
- *Delusion*: Attachment with present position or possession, and attempting to preserve them by any means, though they should have been passed on to others etc.
- *Envy*: Feeling belittled because others are progressing; if the negative feeling is internalized it may lead to inferiority complex of various nature, and if the negative feeling is trying to find ugly outward expression it may lead to harming the person against whom jealousy is stored etc.
- *Vanity or Misplaced Ego*: As a word, the word ‘ego’ is not necessarily bad because the word ‘ego’ has a functional utility. There is function utility of ego when someone introduces himself or herself to others. But misplaced ego is concerned with extreme I-orientation leading to megalomania. Megalomaniac ego suffers with ‘I am correct—all others are incorrect’ syndrome etc.

The lower self of an individual is marred with one impurity or multiple impurities. The journey to higher self gradually makes individuals free from these impurities. Having got rid of dirt of mind is like taking bath—*स्नानं मनोमलत्यागः*¹ *snaanam manomala tyagah* (Skandopanishad: 11). The same sutra also suggests that having senses in control is attaining purity—*शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः shaucham indriya nigrahaah* (Skandopanishad: 11). Sense control is very important concept in Sanskrit scriptures. The five senses—eyes (observing), ears (hearing), nose (olfactory), tongue (taste), and skin (kinesthetic)—if left uncontrolled create entanglement with the objects those are enjoyed by these senses. However the mind is the precursor that leads to the senses getting entangled with the objects. Bhagavad Gita speaks about the entire process of how mind entanglement with objects lead to disgrace:

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः संगस्तेषूपजायते
 सङ्गात् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोभिजायते
 क्रोधात् भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः
 स्मृतिर्भ्रंसात् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रनश्यति
dhyaayato vishayaan punsah sangasteshoopajaayate
sangaat sanjaayate kaamah kaamaat krodhobhijaayate
krodhaat bhawati sammohah sammohaat smritivibrahamah
smritirbhraansaat buddhinaasho buddhinaashaat pranashyati
 (Bhagavad Gita: 2/62–63)

The man dwelling on sense-objects develops attachment for them; from attachment springs up desire, and from desire (unfulfilled) ensues anger. From anger

¹All Devanaagri Font is converted to Unicode using this tool: <http://techwelkin.com/tools/krutidev-unicode-krutidev-font-converter/>

arises infatuation; from infatuation, confusion of memory; from confusion of memory, loss of reason; and from loss of reason one goes to complete ruin.

Thus mind entanglement leads to multiple internal impurities and compels the individual to operate at the level of lower self. The remedy is to use the mind and not to be used by the mind.

Mainly four alternative paths have been suggested to steer the self to the higher level of consciousness. These are:

- (a) *Gyaan Yoga*—Path of supreme knowledge and understanding;
- (b) *Karma Yoga*—Path of detached action comprising of devoted efforts without hankering for fruits;
- (c) *Raaj Yoga*—Path of Meditation;
- (d) *Bhakti Yoga*—Love and Compassion for All, and Surrender to the Supreme Authority.

All the four path of Yoga lead to the journey from lower self to Higher Self. Gyaan Yoga and Raaj Yoga lead to Higher Self directly, Karma Yoga lead to Higher Self through work ethics, and Bhakti Yoga combined with Gyaan Yoga lead to Higher Self through relationship of self with others, and setting right perception to observe the relationship between others and their works.

4 Gyaan Yoga and Raaj Yoga for Managers for Building Integrated Self

Gyaan Yoga is a vast subject. One important aspect chosen from Sanskrit scriptures especially suitable for managers is the concept of *Panch Koshas* (Five Sheaths of Personality) (See Fig. 3):

अथ अन्नमय प्राणमय मनोमय
विज्ञानमय आनन्दमयः पंचकोषः
atha annamaya praanamaya manomaya
vigyaanamaya aanandmayaah panchkoshaah

There are five sheaths: *Annamaya*, *Praanamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vigyaanamaya*, and *Aanandamaya*. (Paingal Upanishad: 2/4)

According to Panch Koshas, a human being has five different layers (sheaths), those can be depicted by five concentric circles. The outermost sheath is Annamaya Kosha (Food Sheath) which is nothing but the physical body. This is nurtured by proper food, exercise, sleep etc. The next inner circle is known as Praanamaya Kosha. This is the energy-body or breathing sheath of the self. Quality breathing nurtures this sheath. Quality breathing can be practiced through Pranayama. Quality breathing has three characteristics—breathing is deep, slow, and rhythmic. Manomaya Kosha is the sheath of the mind and it is the next inner sheath in Panch Kosha. Mind and brain are different. Mind is an inner instrument that

helps to connect with outer world, and also with the inner process during meditation. However, in general mind is used to establish connection with outside world. The other characteristics of the mind are following:

Mind is the seat of will; मनसा संकल्पयति *manasaa sankalpayati* (Garbha Upanishad: 1)—the will is taken through mind;

Mind creates duality; अयम् सोहमिदम् तन्म एतावन्मात्रकम् मनः *ayam sohamidam tanma etaavanmaatrakam manah* (Mahopanishad: 4/95)—emotion of thine and mine itself is mind;

Imagination of the mind fills colours in the world; मनः कल्पित एव पुंसः, संसार एतस्य न वस्तुतोस्ति *manah kalpit eve punsah, sansaar etasya na vastutosti* (Vivek Choodaamani: 173)—the world of this Jeeva (creature) is only as imagined by mind; in reality it does not exist as it appears;

Mind is the cause of bondage as well as the cause of liberation; अशुद्धं काम संकल्पं शुद्ध कामविवर्जितम्, मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः *ashuddham kaam sankalpam shuddha kaama vvarjitam, mun eva manushyaanaam kaaranam bandh mokshayoh* (Brahmabindu Upanishad: 1–2)—mind is of two types: pure, and, impure. Impure mind creates will to fulfill desires, and pure mind is free from desires. Mind is the cause of bondage as well as of liberation.

Mind is the seat of various psychic tendencies; धैर्योपपत्तिर्व्यक्तिश्च विसर्गः कल्पना क्षमा, सदसच्चापुता चैव मनसो नव वै गुणाः *dhairyah upapattih avyaktih cha visargah, kalpanaa kshamaa sat-asat cha ashutaa chaiva manaso nav vai gunaah* (Mahabharata: Shaantiparva: 255/9)—patience, reasoning or disputation, remembrance, forgetfulness or error, imagination, endurance, propensity towards good, propensity towards evil, and restlessness—these are the nine properties of the mind;

The very nature of mind is fickleness; चंचलत्वं मनोधर्मो *chanchalatwam mano dharmo* (Mahopanishad: 4/99);

Mind without fickleness is like nectar; यत्तु चंचलताहीनं तन्मनोऽमृतमुच्यते *yattu chanchalataa heenam, tanmano amritam uchyate* (Mahopanishad: 4/101);

Manomaya Kosha is nurtured through processes of *manan* (pondering over) and Raaj Yoga—the process of meditation. A continuous practice of meditation helps to understand the game of the mind thus helping to control the fickleness of mind. It has been said that the mind that controls the consciousness is the greatest enemy, and the mind regulated by the consciousness is the best friend. Patanjali states: तत्र ध्यानजमनाशयम् *tatra dhyana jamanaashayam* (Yoga Sutra: 4/6)—of these activities of consciousness of perfected beings, only those, who proceed from meditation, are free from latent impressions and influences.

Vigyaanamaya Kosha is the sheath that is seat of wisdom. Wisdom sheath is *neer-ksheer vivekee* i.e. it has capacity to separate milk from water, or the truth from untruth, or the desirables from undesirables etc. Wisdom is the uncontaminated intellect (*buddhi*). The function of Intellect is to ‘determine’—निश्चयात्मिका

बुद्धिः *nishchayaatmikaa budhiih* (Tattwabodh). In acquiring intellect, books or discourses etc. might help but intellect is utterly original and basically not second-hand. Patanjali suggests: ऋतम्भरा तत्र प्रज्ञा श्रुतानुमानप्रज्ञाभ्यामन्यविषया विषेणार्थत्वात् *ritambharaa tatra pragyaa, shruta anumaan pragyaabhyaam anyavishayaa vishesha arthattwaat* (Yog Sutra: 1/48–49).

When consciousness dwells in wisdom, a truth bearing state full of intellectual essence dawns. This truth bearing knowledge and wisdom is distinct from and beyond the knowledge gleaned from books, testimony, or inference. Intellect acquire three different natures—*Saatwik*, *Raajasik*, and *Taamasik*. These are three tendencies. *Saatwik* tendency uplifts the consciousness, *Raajasik* tendency keeps the consciousness where it is, and *Taamasik* tendency leads to downfall of consciousness. *Saatwik*, *Raajasik*, and *Taamasik* intellect have been described as mentioned below:

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।
 बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्तिऽबुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी
 यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च
 अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी
 अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता
 सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी
*pravritting cha nivritting cha kaarya akaarye bhaya abhaye
 bandhang mokshang cha yaa veti buddhih saa Paartha saattwikiee
 yayaa dharmam adharmam cha kaaryang cha akaaryam eva cha
 ayathaavat prajanaati buddhih saa Paartha raajasee
 adharmam dharmam iti yaa manyate tamasaavrita
 sarvaarthaan vipareetaan cha budhiih saa Paarth taamasee*
 (Bhagavad Gita: 18/30–32)

The intellect which correctly determines the paths of activity and renunciation, what ought to be done and what should not be done, what is fear and what is fearlessness, and what is bondage and what is liberation, that intellect is *Saatvik*. The intellect by which man does not truly perceive what is *Dharma* (righteous) and what is *Adharma* (unrighteous), what ought to be done and what should not be done,—that intellect is *Raajasik*. The intellect, which imagines even *Adharma* to be *Dharma* and sees all other things upside-down,—wrapped in ignorance, that intellect is *Taamasik*.

Selfless action keeps the intellect intact, but greed eclipses the intellect—*तृष्णया मतिष्ठाद्यते* *trishnayaa matih chhaadyate* (Chanakya Sutra: 226). However the learned possessing intellect are able to determine correctly:

यत्राधर्मो धर्मरूपाणि धत्ते धर्मः कृत्स्नो दृश्यतेऽधर्मरूपः
 विभ्रद् धर्मो धर्मरूपं तथा च विद्वांसस्तं सम्प्रपश्यन्ति बुद्ध्या
*yatra adharmo dharmarupaani dhatte
 dharmah kritsno drishyate adharmaroopah
 bibhrad dharmo dharmaroopam tathaa cha
 vidwaansastam samprapashyanti buddhyaa*
 (Mahaabhaarat: Udyogaparva: 28/2)

When vice assumes the aspects of virtue and virtue itself wholly seems as vice, and virtue again appears in its native form, they that are learned should discriminate it by means of their reason.

It is also suggested that both kinds of wisdom, straight and crooked, should be within call of the decision maker with supreme authority. Though acquainted with it, one should not, however, apply that wisdom which is crooked (for injuring others). One may use it for resisting the dangers that may overtake him

उभे प्रज्ञे वेदितव्ये ऋज्वी वक्रा च भारत, जानन् वक्रां न सेवेत प्रतिबाधेत जागताम् *ubhe praye veditavye rijwee vakraa cha Bhaarat, jaanan vakraam na sewet pratibaadhet jaagataam* (Mahaabhaarat: Shaantiparva: 100/5).

Three aspects nurture the intellect—Apart from exercising own intelligence, one should settle what one has to do by consulting with others. Through consultation one should either abandon or confirm such resolution. Aided by that intelligence which is sharpened by the scriptures, one can settle one's course of action. In this consists the usefulness of the scriptures

आत्मसंयमनं बुद्ध्या परबुद्ध्यावधारणम्, बुद्ध्या चात्मगुणप्राप्तिरेतच्छास्त्रनिर्दर्शनम् *aatma sanyamanam buddhyaa parabuddhyaa awadhaaranam, buddhyaa cha aatmaguna praaptih etat shaastra nidarshanam* (Mahabharata: Shaantiparva: 120/18).

The fifth and the innermost sheath is Aanandamaya Kosha (Blissful sheath). This blissfulness is the basic nature of human being. It is never contaminated. The quality of this sheath does not differ for one being sane or insane. So the Vedantic literature goes beyond the dual analysis like good versus bad. However different persons differ as the characteristics of outer four sheaths differ in case of two persons. Once impurities of outer four sheaths are removed, the innermost sheath of Aanandmaya Kosha manifests itself in full blooming.

5 Karma: Work Ethics

While Gyaan Yoga and Karma Yoga lead to same destination however Bhagavad Gita seems to have preferred the path of Karma Yoga for certain reason. The scripture states:

सन्न्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ, तयोस्तु कर्मसन्न्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते *sanyaasah karmayogah cha nihshreyasa karaawubhau, tayostu karma sanyaasaat karmayogo vishishyate* (Bhagavad Gita: 5/2)

The Yoga of Knowledge and the Yoga of Action both lead to supreme Bliss. Of the two, however, the Yoga of Action (being easier of practice) is superior to the Yoga of Knowledge.

On one hand Karma Yoga is science and art of perfected action, and on the other it creates positive impact on the person performing the action. The action itself, the

choice of action, and intention behind the action combinedly have great impact on the person behind the action. The intention behind action is ignored in modern management literature but these are highlighted in scriptures—*गुणदोषकृतं जन्तुः स्वकर्म फलहेतुकम् शुभाशुभम् guna dosha kritam jantuh, swakarma falahetukam shubha ashubham* (Ramayana: Kishkindhaakaand: 21/2)—the actions done through benevolent or malevolent intentions by the creatures produce pleasant or sorrowful results. The quality of mind of the person influences one's action and the action itself impacts the person performing the action—*कर्मायतं फलं पुन्सां बुद्धिः कर्मानुसारिणी, तथापि सुधया कार्यं कर्तव्यं सुविचारितः karma aayattam falam punsaam buddhih karma anusaarinee, tathaapi sudhayaa kaarya kartavyam suvichaaritah* (Bhartrihari Neeti Shatak: 90)—a person gets result according to karma, and according to karma his mentality is shaped; nevertheless it is duty of wise to act after pondering over properly. Hence one needs to be careful in choosing the action as the action builds the person. Upanishad suggests that those acts which are irreproachable should be practiced, and no others

यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि तानि सेवितव्यानि नो इतराणि
yaanyan avadyaani karmaani taani sevityaani no itaraani (Taitireeyopanishad: 1/11).

Entire personality is said to be shaped by the deeds of a person. The individual self, roams about according to its deeds.

प्राणाधिपः संचरति स्वकर्मभिः *praanaadhipah sancharati swakarmabhih*
 (Shwetaashwataropanishad: 5/7).

Sanskrit scripture is very elaborate on the theme of science and art of action leading to both—performance of the best action, and action leading to personality growth of the performer of the action. It is suggested that do actions while established in Yoga—*योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि yogasthah kuru karmaani* (Akshyupanishad: 2/3). In this context, yoga means Karma Yoga—the yoga of action. The first qualifier of karma Yoga is to remain established as non-doer (not having the feeling of doer) while performing the action. Appear like a doer, externally, but internally remain non-doer; thus do exist with your pure Self in this world—*कर्ता बहिरकर्ताऽन्तर्लोके विहर शुद्धधीः kartaa bahirkartaa antarloke vihar shuddhadheeh* (Mahopanishad: 6/68).

Karma Yoga is panacea for quality action that also leads to the quality person behind the action. Karma Yoga has been described in many ways. Upanishad states that restraining your mind to actions as prescribed by scriptures is Karma Yoga—*बन्धनं मनसो नित्यं कर्मयोगः स उच्यते bandhanam manaso nityam karma yogah sa uchyate* (Trishikhabraahmanopanishad: 26). We would analyze what Karma Yoga means especially for managers.

Each action if performed through Karma Yoga has capability to improve the person performing the action with instantaneous effect, though the direct fruit of

karma may become available instantaneously or with deferred effect. Karma Yoga is understood through two important concepts—Law of Karma, and Law of Nishkaam Karma. Nishkaam means—without desire. Law of Karma is depicted in the Bhagavad Gita:

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्
nehaabhikrama naashosti pratyavaayo na vidyate
swalpamapyasya dharmasya traayate mahato bhayaat
(Bhagavad Gita: 2/40)

In this path of disinterested action, there is no loss of effort, nor is there fear of contrary result. Even a little practice of this discipline saves one from the terrible fear.

This sutra has multiple implications. These are:

No action is devoid of fruits; जानोदयात्पुराऽऽरब्धं कर्म जानात्र नश्यति, अदत्त्वा स्वफलं लक्ष्यमुद्दिष्योत्सृष्टबाणवत् *gyaanodayaat puraarabdham karma gyaanaat na nashyati, adatwaa swafalam lakshyam uddishyot srishta baanawat* (Aadhyaatmopanishad: 53)

As an arrow directed to an aim does not stop in between, so the actions done before realizing the Knowledge, yield result even after realization of the Knowledge. It is also stated that without cause there is no effect—कारणाभावात् कार्याभावः *kaarana abhaawaat kaarya abhaawah* (Vaisheshik: 4/1/3).

Like action, like fruits—positive actions produce positive fruits and negative actions produce negative fruits. In this context it is stated: कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः, अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः *karmano hyapi boddhavyam cha vikarmanah, akarmanah cha boddhavyam gahanaa karmano gatih* (Bhagavad Gita: 4/17)—the truth about action must be known and the truth of inaction also must be known; even so the truth about prohibited action must be known. For mysterious are the ways of action. Ramayana States: अवश्यमेव लभते फलं पापस्य कर्मणः, शुभकृच्छुभमाप्नोति पापकृत् पापमश्नुते *awashyam eva labhate falam paapasya karmanah, shubha krit shhubham aapnoti paapa krit paapamashnute* (Ramayana: Yuddhakaand: 111/25–26)—result of sinful activities is necessity. Righteous action produces good result, and sinful activity produces sorrow. Further, यादृषं कुरुते कर्म तादृषं फलमश्नुते *yaadrisham kurute karma taadrisham falamashnute* (Ramayana: Uttaraakaand: 15/24–25)—like the action, like the result.

An action might produce instantaneous fruit or deferred fruit. There are three types of Karma: Aagaamee, Sanchit, and Praarabdha—कर्माणि आगामि सचित प्रारब्ध भेदेन त्रिविधानि सनित *karmaani aagaamee sanchit praarabdha bheden trividhaani santi* (Tattwabodh). Aagaamee means action to be performed in future, Sanchit means actions performed in past which would bear fruit in future, and Praarabdha means actions performed in the past which have started showing result

now. Smriti (book of law) states that नाधर्मश्चरितो लोके सद्यः फलति गीरिव, शनैरावर्तमानस्तु कर्तुर्मूलानि कृन्तति *na adharmah charito loke saddyah falati geeriva, shanaih aawartamaanastu kartuh moolaani krintati* (Manusmriti: 4/172)—sin committed, does not give instantaneous result as seed sown in the earth; however slowly, when the time of fructification comes, it uproots the sinner.

Each action is independent in terms of giving fruits and no action cancels the effect of other action. Only in case of rare intense righteous action in present, the result of unrighteous action done in past is said to be neutralized—धर्माश्चाधर्माशनः *dharmaah cha adharmah naashanah* (Ramayana: Sundarkaand: 51/28).

A deeper understanding of the Law of Action has deeper implication for choice of action, thus helping in the process of decision making. That, who does not know the gravity or meanness of the result, who does not understand the merit or flaw of the action while initiating the action, is called childish—गुरुलाघवमर्थानामारम्भे कर्मणां फलम्, दोषं वा यो न जानाति स बाल इति होच्यते *guru laaghavam arthaanaam aarambhe karmanaam falam, dosham waa yo na jaanaati sa baala iti hochyate* (Ramayana: Ayodhyaakaand: 63/7).

Law of Nishkaam Karma is the science of putting the best possible action for maximizing the possibility of attaining the targeted goal. Nishkaam Karma means putting action for the sake of action without hankering for the result. Nishkaam Karma has been prescribed in the Bhagavad Gita:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि
*karmanyewa adhikaaraste maa falesu kadaachana
maa karmafala hetuh bhooh maa te sangoh tu akarmani* (Bhagavad Gita: 2/47).

Your right is to work only, but never to the fruit thereof. Be not instrumental in making your actions bear fruit, nor let your attachment be to inaction.

Law of Nishkaam Karma has following implications for managers:

Jurisdiction of the performer of action is limited up to performing the action and in no way jurisdiction extends to the domain of getting fruits/results. It is further stated: आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते, योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते *aaorookshoh muneh yogam karma kaaranam uchyate, yoga aaroodhasya tasyaiva shamah kaaranam uchyate* (Bhagavad Gita: 6/3). To the contemplative soul who desires to climb to the heights of Karmayoga, disinterested action is spoken of as the stepping-stone; for the same man when he is established in Yoga, absence of all thoughts of the world is said to be the way of blessedness. Renunciation of the fruit of actions is said to be even superior to meditation, for peace immediately follows from renunciation—विशिष्यते ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् *vishishyate dhyanaat karmafala tyagaah, tyagaah shaantih anantaram* (Bhagavad Gita: 12/12).

Fruits are natural byproduct of action, so in the role of performer of action one is not supposed to keep eyes on fruits.

Performance of action may lead to the targeted fruits, however performance (even the best one) does not guarantee the result.

Perfected performance only increases the probability of getting the result.

While performing work if result is pondered over, the performance may become diluted thus reducing the probability of getting the result.

Performance of task has to be done without having the sense of doer-ship; the performer is only an instrument in the hands of vast cosmic arrangement of the things. It is stated: **निमित्तमात्रं भव**

nimitta maatram bhava (Bhagavad Gita: 11/33)—be you only an instrument.

Action must be in all situations replace non-action, with no attachment with non-action. Bhagavad Gita further states: **न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते, न च सन्न्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति** *na karmanaam anaarambhaan naishkarmyam purushoshnute, na cha sanyasanaat eva siddhim samadhigachchhati* (Bhagavad Gita: 3/4)—man does not attain freedom from action without entering upon action; nor does he reach perfection merely by ceasing to act. It further states: **कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः, लोकसङ्ग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि** *karmanaiva hi sansiddhim aasthitaa Janak-aadayah, lokasangraham eva api sampashyan kartumarhasi* (Bhagavad Gita: 3/20)—it is through action (without attachment) alone that Janaka and other wise men reached perfection. Having an eye to maintenance of the world order too one should take to action.

One who is hankering for result and not established in Nishkaam Karma Yoga gets dejected with bad aftermath effect if the targeted result is not achieved or becomes subjected to elation if result is obtained because of attachment with result. Whereas one established in Nishkaam Karma Yoga remains neutral between success and failure and keeps energy level intact for next course of action;

Having not established in Nishkaam Karma Yoga gives joy only when result is obtained, whereas having established in Nishkaam Karma Yoga gives joy during the process of work as well as his/her neutrality between success and failure does not make the person devoid of joy.

While describing the three types of actions and three types of doers, Bhagavad Gita states:

नियतं सङ्ग्रहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
 अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यतत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते
 यतुकामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।
 क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम्
 अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्षयं च पौरुषम् ।
 मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यततामसमुच्यते
 मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
 सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते
 रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्बुद्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः
 हर्षशेकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः
 अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठोऽनैष्कृतिकोऽलसः

विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते

*niyatam sangarahitam araagadweshatah kritam
afala prepsunaa karma yat tat saattwikam uchyate
yat tu kaamepsunaa karma sa ahankaaren waa punah
kriyate bahulaayaasam tat raajasam udaahritam
anubandham kshayam hinsaam anawekshya cha paurusham
mohaataarabhyate karma yat tat taamasam uchyate
muktasangah anahamwaadee dhriti utsaaha samanwita
siddhi asiddhyoh nirwikaarah kartaa saattwik uchyate
raagee karmafala prepsuh lubdhah hinsaatmakah ashuchih
harsha shoka anwitaah kartaa raajasah parikeertitah
ayuktah praakritah stabdhah shatho naishkritikah alasa
vishaadee deerghasootree cha kartaa taamas uchyate
(Bhagavad Gita: 18/23–28)*

The action, which is ordained by the scriptures and is not accompanied by the sense of doer-ship, and has been done without any partiality or prejudice by one, who seeks no return, is called Saatwik. That action however, which involves much strain and is performed by one who seeks enjoyments or by a man full of egotism, has been spoken of as Raajasik. The action which is undertaken through sheer ignorance, without counting the upshot, loss to oneself, injury to others and one's own capacity, is declared as Taamasik. Free from attachment, un-egotistic, endowed with firmness and vigor and un-swayed by success and failure—such a doer is said to be Saatwik. The doer, who is full of attachment, seeks the fruit of actions and is greedy, and who is oppressive by nature and of impure conduct, and is affected by joy and sorrow, has been called Raajasik. Lacking piety and self-control, uncultured, arrogant, deceitful, inclined to rob others of their livelihood, slothful, down-hearted and procrastinating, such a doer is called Taamasik.

6 Relationship and Perception Ethics

Self-development also depends upon how one relates himself or herself with others. In managerial domain one has to relate with others with utter impartiality yet one has to differentiate among people based on merit, skills or performance. The challenge is that how to address this apparent anomaly? Aadi Shankaraachaarya suggests that though appearing to be partial (externally), he/she remains impartial internally—असमः समदर्शनः *asamah sama darshanah* (Vivek Choodaamani: 544). The base of relationship ethics in Sanskrit literature appear to be Ekkatmaanobhooti (looking at the self and all others with equanimity) yet being able to differentiate among others based on proportional equity and not based on absolute equity—nevertheless maintaining absolute empathy intact. Scriptures invite us to resign from the world of reaction and take the citizenship of the world of response. Reaction creates bondage with another person and with the act of reaction itself. Reaction is second-hand, and response is original—once own choice. Reaction makes us poorer, response is indicator of behavioral richness. About the art of receiving positive and negative feedback it is stated that a person with wisdom does

not feel rejoiced if praised, nor gets subjected to wrath if condemned—न प्रीयते वन्द्यमानो निन्द्यमानो न कुप्यति *na preeyate vandyamaano nindyamaano na kupyati* (Ashtaavakra Geeta: 18/99). If a person is able to count one's own merit, he/she should be able to count others merit also. Again if one is able to count shortcomings of others, he/she should be able to count the shortcomings of the self also—स्वदोषपरदोषवित् *swadosha pardoshawit* (Ramayana: Ayodhyaakaand: 1/24) meaning that one should know the shortcomings of self as well as of others. In interpersonal dealings one attains equanimity when he/she neither inflicts fear on others nor subjects himself to fear—; दा चायं न बिभेति यदा चास्मात्र विभ्यति *yadaa cha ayam na bibheti, yadaa cha asmaanna vibhyati* (Mahaabhaarat: Aadiparva: 75/53).

While relating with the other (especially senior) in certain circumstances, the top priority is not to be attached to keep the other person in good humor in case such dormant support might lead the person to disadvantaged situation or downfall in the long run. On one hand a person needs to lessen the troubles of others because the nature of the great souls is to involve them to lessen the troubles of others. अयं स्वभावः स्वत एव यत्पर श्रमापनोदप्रवणं महात्मनाम् *ayam swabhaawah swat eva yatpar shrama apanoda pravanang mahaatmanaam* (Vivek Choodaamani: 40). But on the other hand a person must suggest (though appearing bitter in the beginning) what is desirable and righteous for others. Sant Tulasidas (who basically wrote in Awadhee) suggests that if a patient distracted by his/her malady asks for something, which is harmful to self, the physician would not give it. कुपथ माग रुज ब्याकुल रोगी वैद न देइ सुनहु मुनि जोगी *kupath maag ruj byaakul rogee, baid na dei sunahu muni jogee* (Ramcharitmanas: Baalkaand: 133/1). Such suggestions however needed to be given by keeping the self-esteem of others intact. Especially while dealing with youngsters or juniors or those depending on you, Chaanakya suggests that behave as a noble person because he/she treats others' troubles as of one's own—आश्रितदुःखमात्मन इव मन्यते साधुः *aashrit duhkham aatman iva manyate saadhuh* (Chaanakya Sutra: 526).

In this VUCA world, a queer phenomenon is happening in the domain of human behavior that has been described in Ramayana, written by Sage Vaalmeeki. He states:

प्रशमस्च क्षमा चैव आर्जवम् प्रियवादिता
 असामर्थ्यफला ह्येते निर्गुणेषु सताम गुणाः
 आत्मप्रशंसिनम् दुष्टम् धृष्टम् विपरिधावकम्
 सर्वत्रोत्श्रुष्टदंडम् च लोकः सत्कुरुते नरम्
*prashamah cha kshamaa chaiva aarjavam priya vaaditaa
 asaamarthya phalaa hyete nirguneshu sataam gunaah
 aatma prashansinam dushtam dhrishtam viparidhaawakam
 sarvatrot shrishhta dandam cha lokah sat kurute naram*
 (Ramayana: Yudhakaand: 21/14–16)

Peace, forbearance, simplicity, and mild words are qualities of good persons. However, persons of less virtue interpret such qualities of good persons as incapability. Persons who are indulged in self-praise, who are wicked, who are stubborn, who attack everywhere, and who inflict harsh punishment on all kinds of persons (virtuous or wicked) are getting respect everywhere.

However wise persons are not distracted by such misinterpretations of the wicked. Patanjali suggests the ways to deal with people who are happy, unhappy, virtuous, and wicked. He states:

मैत्रीकरुणामुदितोपेक्षाणां, सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां, भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम्
maitri karunaa mudit upekshaanam, sukha duhkha punya apunya vishayaanaam,
bhaavanaatah chitta prasaadanam
 (Yog Sutra: 1/33)

Through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to those who are happy, unhappy, virtuous and wicked respectively, the consciousness becomes favorably disposed, serene and benevolent.

Thus Patanjali shows the way how appropriate behaviors towards different types of people could also help for self-development.

7 Conclusion

This article attempted to discuss about how in VUCA world the integrated-self can be developed in organizational context through helping the self to grow through self-efforts, through following the golden rules of work ethics, relationship ethics, and perception ethics as described in Sanskrit scriptures.

With respect to ‘self’ dimension of Organizational Behavior vis-à-vis as proposed in the framework of this chapter, let us compare the content, pedagogy, and outcome of the two sets (Table 3).

The future research in the direction of managing and integrating self in context of Organizational Behavior is full with possibilities. In the light of this chapter, future directions of research include—study of impact of internalizing process of learning including practice of silence, meditation etc. on self-efficacy; effect of centripetalized self on human interactions with others; fragmented versus integrated self and their implications of connection with work i.e. work as duty or work as joy.

Reflective Questions

1. Is the discourse on ‘self’ in Organizational Behavior sufficient to prepare individuals for addressing the challenges of VUCA world?
2. Is not time-tested wisdom of scriptures warranted to be integrated with study on ‘self’? It may be any scripture.
3. Is not our education (on self) rotates mainly around recent empirical findings which themselves crisscross many a times to add to confusion? At least as a supplement, is it not required to explore geography-neutral, time-neutral wisdom as pivot to understand and appropriately appreciate the changes on the periphery?

Table 3 Proposed orientation of organization behavior in management education

Orientation	Today	Proposed
Content	Values Attitudes Emotions Personality Perception Motivation	Understanding of values, attitudes, emotions, personality, perception, and motivation through process of self-purification and imbibing the concepts like: Six Impurities, Panch Kosha, Antahkaran Chatushtaya, Three Gunas, Understanding of Karma, and understanding of others through developing Ekaatmaanubhooti, proportional equity, and empathy
Pedagogy	Theory Framework Case Discussion Activity based learning Inventories Empiricism Analysis Debate at large	Understanding scriptural cues Meditation Introspection Contemplation Experiential learning Internalizing Synthesis Reviewing thoughts through intimate dialogues
Outcome	Informed individual Skill-based learning Maneuvering approach Outside-inside knowledge Debating self Fragmented self Discrete self-development Reaction towards others Action as duty	Individual with understanding Value-based learning Dealing with self-purity Inside-outside understanding Conceiving self Integrated self Continuous self-development Response towards others Action as source of fulfillment

4. Is our purpose of education to create only an informed-argumentative individual or there is responsibility towards preparing understanding-contemplative individuals also?

References

Ashtaavakra. (1993). *Ashtaavakra Geetaa*. Mumbai: Khemraj Shrikrishnadas Publication.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, A. C. (1994). *Bhagavad Gita (part of Mahaabhaarat)*. Gita Press Gorakhpur (Adopted English translation of the sutras in this article).

Chaanakya. (2006). *Chaanakya Neeti; translation and comments by Vishwamitra Sharma*. Delhi: Manoj Publications.

Chaanakya Sutra; Compilation by Abid Rizvi. Meerut: Dheeraj Pocket Books.

Gautam, C. (Ed.). (1988). *Bhartrihari Neeti Shatak*. Bareilly: Sanskriti Sansthan.

Goyandaka, H. (Interpreter). *Shwetaashwataropnishad; Iishaadi Nau (Nine) Upanishad*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2052.

Goyandaka, H. (Interpreter). *Taitireeyopnishad; Iishaadi Nau (Nine) Upanishad*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2052.

Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998a). *Brahmabindu Upanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998b). *Aadhyaatmopanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998c). *Akshyupanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998d). *Garbha Upanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998e). *Mahopanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998f). *Niraalamb Upanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998g). *Paingal Upanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998h). *Trishikhabraahmanopanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jagadeesh Shastri, P. (Ed.). (1998i). *Skandopanishad; Upanishad Sangrahaah*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Jwala Prasad Chaturvedi, P. (Interpreter). (1996). *Manusmriti*. Haridwar: Randheer Prakashan.
- Maharshi Patanjali. (2003). *Yog Sutras* (Translation and Commentary by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood). Chennai: Sri Ramakrishna Math.
- Maharshi Vaalmeeeki. *Ramayana*. Gita Press Gorakhpur. Samvat 2051.
- Puri Gyaneshwar, U. (Explanation and Ed.). (2000). *Shukra Neeti*. Haridwar: Randheer Prakashan.
- Somdev Bhatt, S. (1977). *Kathaasaritsaagar*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas.
- Shriram Sharma Acharya, P. (Ed.). (1994). *Samkhya*. Bareli: Sanskriti Sansthan.
- Shankaraachaarya, A. *Vivek Choodaamani*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2052.
- Shriram Sharma Acharya, P. (Ed.). (1990). *Vaisheshik*. Bareli: Sanskriti Sansthan.
- Shriram Sharma Acharya, P. (Ed.). (1996). *Yogvaasishtha*. Bareli: Sanskriti Sansthan.
- Swami Shankarananda (Commenter). *Tattwabodh; Aadi Shankaraachaarya*. Kanpur: Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.
- Tulasidas, S. *Raamcharitmaanas (basically in Awadhee language)*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2066.
- Vyaas, V. *Mahaabhaarat*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2058.
- Vyaas, V. *Vidur Neeti (part of Mahaabhaarat); Mahaabhaarat*. Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2058.

Pawan Kumar Singh is Professor at Indian Institute of Management Indore in the area of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management. He has more than 26 years of experience in academics in the field of post-graduate teaching in management, training, research, consulting and academic administration. Before career in academics he has worked in banking sector in the field of industrial relations. His research interest include interpretation of managerial effectiveness through the lens of scriptural insights, spirituality in management, and human values for managers. The hobbies enjoyed by him include traveling, music, sports, astronomy, and poetry.

The Embodied Inter-be(com)ing of Spirituality: The In-Between as Spiritual Sphere in Practically Wise Organizations

Wendelin Küpers

1 Introduction

Organizations and their members and stakeholders as well as our economy and society are living in a ‘World of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity’. This world is characterized by daunting demands and challenges that are calling for a radical re-orientation and re-valuation (Mack and Khare 2015). Not only has the nature and dynamics of change, and corresponding change forces and change catalyst themselves altered, there is also the lack or impossibility of predictability and the role of chance and surprises as well as the multiplex of forces, and confounding of issues, confusion and ambiguities of possible meanings that characterize organizations with their relationships and environments.

What becomes increasingly apparent is that we are living in an interdependent reality, calling for an enacted responsibility and practical wisdom (Küpers 2013) as it has been known by integral ecology and spiritual traditions for a long time. At the same time the lack or regression of sensitivities, integral sense-making and prudent reason(ing) in our time has led to individuals, organizations, economies and societies being dominated by mindlessness, unreason, folly, and irresponsibility.

Being entrapped in a narrow mind-set, refraining from questioning dominant assumptions, beliefs, norms and expectations or prevailing ideas and values or objectives, a functional stupidity (Alvesson and Spicer 2012) manifests a lack of reflexivity, and reasoning, reproducing unitary cultures of business as usual, generating potentially or actually disastrous outcomes. While facing the Anthropocene, as new epoch, based on human influence on the planet, we are situated under the reign of forces that show a lack of wisdom as we are facing an ecological, social and economic crisis of global proportions and various local impacts. This even more as our contemporary hyper-industrial societies become

W. Küpers (✉)

Karlsruhochschule International University, Karlstraße 36–38, 76133 Karlsruhe, Germany
e-mail: wkuepers@karlsruhochschule.de

increasingly uncontrollable, profoundly irrational, while generating dead-end futures from zombie cultures of mass consumerism to the devastation of the biosphere and its elemental foundation and species. Approaching regional-level planetary boundaries, more and more we are facing limit-character of the current situation of auto-destructive hyper-systems and its undermining manifestations.

How are we to move from reductive transcendence as conditions of possibility of unwise knowing and acting towards an opening immanence in which singularizing, actual experiences and integral processes can unfold in wise ways practically?

In particular, how to understand and enact a wisdom and spiritual practice in and through organizations, while living in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous worlds (VUCA)? These worlds are characterized by speeding up in a ‘rushing stand-still’, dictations of unpredictable developments, and losses of certainties, while setting out into the unknown. Furthermore, living in such worlds implies facing complexities of interwoven factors, inter-dependencies, in a variability of relationships and non-linear discontinuous processes, and ongoing changes of environmental, socio-cultural and economic contexts. What would it then mean to respond to this situation by slowing down, daring to allow the uncertain and complex as well as embracing ambiguity and living by following an ethos of engaged letting-go (Gelassenheit)?

For dealing with these questions, quests and challenges what is needed is a more embodied, inter-relational process-oriented approach, especially related to organization and leadership/management studies and practices that consider and re-integrate bodied minds and a living mindful spirituality. In our contemporary context and ‘post-secular society’, the topic of spirituality and ways of its integration the same in the workplace have generated a momentum that has gained resonance in organizational and leadership studies and practices (e.g. Fry 2003; Hicks 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz 2002). The role of spirituality in organisation, its various definitions, and embedded assumptions and contested meanings have been investigated for quite some time (e.g. Dent et al. 2005; Tracey 2012; Long and Helms-Mills 2010; Bell and Taylor 2016). However, various dangers, problems and limitations of (cultic) spirituality at work in organisation and leadership have been discussed (e.g. Carrette and King 2005; Tourish and Tourish 2010), calling for a critically informed analysis (Cunha et al. 2006).

What is needed is a more pluralistic and integrative vision of spirituality in organizations (Edwards 2004) that considers the spiritual *critically* and *bodily*. For moving towards an embodied and critical spirituality of organization (Bell 2008) as well as for situating and reflecting about possibilities for integrating spirituality in business and society, a phenomenological understanding can be helpful. In particular, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of the body and his ontological understanding of the relational constitution of being (1995, 2012), fosters more embodied, mindful and integral spiritual perspectives on, and enactment in, organization and leadership. His approach helps rehabilitating the body and embodiment as well as the in-between as mediating, enacted expressive spiritual sphere for practically wise organizing and leading (Küpers 2007, 2011a, 2013; Küpers and Statler 2008) and wisdom learning (Küpers and Pauleen 2015). As such, it can also provide

inspiration for researcher to inquire into and practitioner to navigate through their life-worlds and its transformation under conditions of VUCA.

Accordingly, the premise of the following is that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and post-dualistic ontology provide a source for approaching and interpreting bodily and embodied phenomena and practices in 'VUCA-situated' organizational contexts. From Merleau-Ponty we can learn to interpret these phenomena as emerging events and media for an enacted spirituality as enfleshed realization of 'inter-be(com)ing'.

The body of the following text is organized as follows: First the connection between phenomenology and spirituality and the significance of the body and an embodied spirituality is outlined. Then the importance of an integrative re-remembering in relation to the nexus of 'self-other-things' and enfleshed 'integral being' in organization is highlighted. Correspondingly, the final part discusses Merleau-Ponty's concept of Flesh is then presented as elemental carnality and formative medium and implications for enfleshed spirituality and inter-practice in 'organic-izations'.

2 Phenomenology and Spirituality

Phenomenology is connected to spirituality in terms of research on religious and spiritual phenomena and in relation to its specific methodological approach of epoché in relation to contemplation (Küpers 2016).

A phenomenological approach of religion and spirituality investigates in particular experiential dimensions of related phenomena, components and meanings across spiritual traditions and practices. Accordingly, phenomenology is contentiously used for studying religious and mystic experiences (Steinbock 2007). Various forms of a phenomenology of religion (e.g. Cox 2006; Ekeke 2010; Eliade 1987; Moreau 2001; Sharma 2001) explore and interprets various ways in which the spiritual or sacred appear or are revealed or processed by human beings as 'homo religious' in the world (van der Leeuw 1963: 50). Furthermore, phenomenology inquires the 'essence' of religious phenomena of specific experiences (e.g. mysticism, holiness, benediction, 'numinous', inspiration) and their expressions or actual spiritual practices, e.g. prayer, ritual, myths, symbols, doctrines etc. (Nelson 2009).

The connection between phenomenology and religion has been an enduring one with different philosophers exploring spiritual and religious themes and orientations.¹ Postmodernist positions, like deconstructionist, post-structuralist,

¹For example, Levinas with his focus on ethics, spirituality, and Jewish philosophy, emphasized radical alterity and the primacy of the other, thus are reversing earlier phenomenological self-other emphasis on the privileged status of the epistemic constituting self or ego. Or Ricoeur, with his hermeneutical interpretation of meaning provided insights on religious language, symbolism, evil, and narrative. Furthermore, Derrida developed a deconstructionist philosophy, investigated spiritual dimensions based on a post-phenomenological critique of presence with an affirmation of

narrativist, pragmatist, feminist, and relativist approaches, have criticized the traditional (Husserlian-oriented) phenomenology of religion's claim to uncover universal structures and essences as being too reductionistic in denying the diversity and plurality of religious phenomena. This model includes recognition of signs and language as a starting point; rejecting essentializing hegemonic approaches with their universalizing claims to objectivity; post-modern orientations increasingly recognize that (spiritual) selves or subjects and communities are always embodied and embedded, relational and interactive, contextualized, co-constituted and co-constituting. To understand spirituality requires considering the dialogical, mutually interactive relations between persons and their perspectives; and affirming of open-ended, perspectival nature of all knowledge with emphasis on non-closure of interpretations and explanations (e.g. Flood 1999).

In discussing a spiritual turn in the late works of the French postmodern philosophers, Benedikter (2005) develops a concept of a mature postmodernism that helps to see postmodern spirituality as an post traditional orientation and epistemological possibility in line with an existential and phenomenological reclamation of spiritual principles, yet removed from theology (Schreiber 2012).

Considering the rise of neo-integrative worldviews, perspectives on and moves towards a 'rational' because self-conscious and self-observant spirituality for the coming planetary civilization have been discussed (Benedikter and Molz 2011).² From a neo-integrative perspective spirituality today, while integrating a critical reflexivity and multi-rational modes of cognition, emotion and ethical commitment, need to be considered as an integral part of embodied everyday life, regardless of specific beliefs to be liberal, emancipatory and empowering, and enacting both inner and outer transformation.

the religious other. Recently a theological turn in phenomenology (e.g. Marion, Henry) gained traction that manifests a renewed interest in the philosophical essence-oriented phenomenology of religion. This turn includes discussions about the claim that the phenomenological project itself, tout court, tacitly presupposes a religious or theological element (Reynolds 2008; Benson and Wirzba 2010). However, there the danger of such theo-phenomenological orientation is that it is promoting a theological agenda under the guise of phenomenological scholarship.

²Such rational spirituality involves understanding the "relationship with the unknown or the 'absent presence' paradoxically present in every human life and thus directly open to individual experience, systematic research and collective understanding in full accordance with the rules of investigation, production of knowledge and distribution of insight rightly set by modernity" (ibid. 51). However "for philosophical and spiritual reasons alike, the late postmodern mind, although already 'proto-spiritual' in some of its trajectories, turned out to be limited in its scope, its cognitive capacities and its boundaries of validity and legitimacy (ibid. 58). As Benedikter and Molz show, contemporary integrative frameworks and approaches share "inclusive, emancipatory understandings of the multi-faceted complexity of human being, of society and of nature, as well as insight into the non-separateness of the individual and social planes, and of the objective and subjective realms" (ibid. 61). As diverse and marginal they are they are "in process of making a potentially sustainable impact on the global intellectual landscape, especially when defending their well-grounded claims both in theory and in practice (ibid. 61).

3 Phenomenology and the Body/Embodied Spirituality

Phenomenology provides the resources and touch-stones for an embodied enquiry in research on and practice of spirituality (Todres 2007). As much as research needs to be an embodied practice also spirituality is an embodied expressive movement of mimesis and poesis between freedom and vulnerability. The (dis-)connections between the body and spirituality as well as the role of an incarnational spiritual praxis have been studied (Ferrer 2006, 2008a, b). For Ferrer (2008a, b: 2) a fully embodied spirituality is engaging the body and its vital/primary energies for spiritual transformation. This transformation: *“emerges from the creative interplay of both immanent and transcendent spiritual energies in complete individuals who embrace the fullness of human experience while remaining firmly grounded in body and earth and creative exploration of expanded forms of spiritual freedom”* (Ferrer 2008a, b: 2).

and who cooperate in solidarity with others in the spiritual transformation of self, community, and world, while “firmly grounded in Spirit-Within, fully open to Spirit-Beyond, and in transformative communion with Spirit In-Between. . . .” (ibid. 2008a, b: 8).

Accordingly, a living spirituality is an embodied co-creation and enactment of the space of the between via an ‘inter-embodiment’ (Todres 2007: 31) and an aesthetic communication and sharing. Based on and mediated through attunement, movement and rhythm, metaphorically expressed being spiritual is like an embodied intuitive and creative dance with the now as and in a ‘soulful space’, a living encounter of embodied co-presences. Poetically expressed; being rooted in bodily way, we can fly between sky and earth on the wings of “the angel of the between” (Todres 2007: 18).

An incarnational spiritual praxis is a multi-dimensional co-creative process. This process supports a participatory and performative en-action that: *“seeks the creative transformation of the embodied person and the world, the spiritualization of matter and the sensuous grounding of Spirit, and, ultimately, the bringing together of heaven and earth”* (Ferrer 2008a, b: 8–9).

4 Re-membering as Integration of Embodied Spirituality in Organization

Considering the absent presence of the body and embodiment (Leder 1990; Shilling 1993) or a marginalized and appropriating understanding in social and organizational theory and practice, as well as a neglect of embodied spirituality, phenomenology contributes to a re-membering. This re-membering allows a critique of reductionistic understandings and misled interpretation of practices also within a management and organization that prioritizes instrumentally oriented action (Hancock 2009).

Re-considering bodies in organization helps to understand how they are always already and potentially differently serve as media for their members and

stakeholders to inter-related and inter-act. To re-member can reveal how embodied selves and all members involved, look at, listen to and respect each other with and through their bodies, that is, how ‘they touch, smell, taste, [and] have sentiments and senses they argue, yell, get nervous and even die’ (Nicolini et al. 2003: 22).

Re-membering the nexus of body and embodiment in organizing also contributes to an extended understanding of a grounded but uplifting spirituality, including the influence of and ‘materio-socio-cultural’ dimensions, affects, feelings and reflections in and on action as well as further collective and systemic dimensions as all being part of practices in a ‘re-embodied organization’ (Styhre 2004).

Being much more than a process of contacting and retrieving suppressed voices, re-membering or re-collecting is also a process of integrative and transformative re-claiming or bringing forth potentials of bodily felt sense-of-being-in-the-world, and developing our bodily awareness and cultivating its capacities for listening the echoes of responsibility before the voice of reason (Kleinberg-Levin 2008) participating in spiritual dimension of existence (Kleinberg-Levin 1985: 53, 68, 77). Thus, re-turning to origins and pre-levels follows a trans-personal ‘spiral to integration’ model (Washburn 2003) that accommodates an opening, ‘progressive’ (not back-warding) ‘regression’ in the service of transcendence for ascending to higher, trans-egoic levels that involves a perspective of non-separative being-here and is immanent in the situational depth and practical engagements.

In this sense, phenomenology contributes to an enriched understanding of a re-embodied, enacted spiritual understanding and practice by re-turning to inter-related phenomena, things and events in their life-worldly situatedness and disclosing its meanings. This turning moves towards the embedding horizon of “all activities and possible praxis” (Husserl 1970: 142) as an embodied nexus of experiences, intentions and actions as they are entwined, also in organizations as situated and ‘inter-placed’ life-worlds (Sandberg and Dall’Alba 2009; Küpers 2010).

5 Embodied ‘Self-Other-Things’ and “Integral Being” in Organizations

In particular the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1995, 2012), helps to understand the role of the body and embodied dimensions in organization (Küpers 2015a, b). According to Merleau-Ponty our bodies and forms of embodiment are our ways of being in and towards the world, also spiritually. From this viable perspective, both are not only functioning as surfaces for inscriptions or discursive constructions, but are having an experiential depth and specificity (Leder 1990). As all perceiving and seeing is bound up with the bodily-worldly imbrications, the embodied perceivers are living, breathing, faithing and moving around in a world of which they are an immanent part. At the same time they are immersed in this world they are transcending it. Furthermore, understood as living media, body and embodiment are offering transformational moves towards elevated heights and spirituality also in relation to applied forms of bodies at work and embodied agencies in organizations (Küpers 2014a). What renders Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of

embodiment particularly important for a critical understanding of embodied spiritual practices in organizations is his critique of materialism and idealism. Following logics of exclusion, both reduce live-worldly phenomena, perception and sensation either to the realm of matter or to that of ideas, each failing to explain the expressive sense of emergent practices as embodied inter-becoming (Küpers 2014a, b). Instead Merleau-Ponty he developed a bodily-mediated and embodied understanding of practicing as part of an interwoven post-dichotomous nexus of “self-other-things” (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 57) and perspectival and transformative “integral being” (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 84) characterized by an inextricable implication. The living ‘reflexive’ body functions as a medium of crossing, where mind and matter; culture and nature, self and world, as well as meanings and forces, meet and unfold. The embodied ‘subject’ and their likewise embodied intersubjective and ‘inter-objective’ life-world are an extensive continuum, in which both are embedded and actively co-creative and take part in a passive mode as part of an ‘inter-being’ (Merleau-Ponty 2003: 208), for example of stakeholders related to organizations.

As unruly, unpredictable, and unmanageable be(com)ings, the body and embodiment are decentering. Neither is centered or ‘mastering’, but disrupting, undermining, and escaping purposive and boundary-drawing orders. Accordingly, bodily and embodied forces underlie the processual, dynamic, and unfinished nature of any perceiving, feeling, thinking, intending, responding, and acting as well as its material, bio-socio-cultural world spheres also related to organizing. All of them are intricately intertwined and mutually ‘engaged’ within an ever-present relational sphere, which Merleau-Ponty calls the ‘Flesh’ of the world.

6 **Flesh as Elemental Carnality and Formative Medium for an In-Between of ‘Fulfilling Emptiness’**

As a polyvalent, variegated open-ended term and metaphor ‘Flesh’ is used by Merleau-Ponty (1995) as an essential ontological principle that helps overcome entrenched dualisms. He sees the lived and living body as an ambiguous Being enabling possibilities of expression. As an ontological concept and carnal image Flesh expresses and facilitates associations to both the sensible and bodily commonality of beings and also to the generative capacity of a difference-enabling polymorphous and ambiguous be(com)ing.³

³According to Merleau-Ponty (2012: 172), “ambiguity is essential to human existence, and everything we live or think has always several senses” and particularly the experience of our own body reveals an ambiguous mode of existing (ibid, 204). The body’s inherent ambiguity lies in its ability to simultaneously encompass presence and absence, incarnation and transcendence, being and consciousness (Carey 2000). Accordingly, if human existence is a field of ambiguity (Sallis 1973), and ambiguity is also integral to professional life-worlds (Dall’Alba 2009) a phenomenological approach and description of ambiguities need to see how embodied human experience participates in structures and no structures, time and no time, personal, pre-personal and transpersonal dimensions. Spiritual maturity as the lived ability and embodied practice to

In this post-dualistic ontology of elemental and transformational be(com)ing the reversible Flesh serves as an elemental carnality and formative ‘medium’ that is processed through a chiasm. The latter one refers to a crisscrossing structure and mediating process of multiplex, heterogeneous, and overlapping relations (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 130–155).

Merleau-Ponty considers the intertwining and reversibility of pre-personal, personal, inter- and trans-personal dimensions. In so doing, his ontology of Flesh allows a profound and relational understanding of phenomena and an embodied spirituality of an embodied inter-be(tween)ing as “identity-encompassing-difference” (Dillon 1988: 159).

In the crossing of in-between an differentiation between the touching and the touched, the seeing and the seen, mind and world, self and others emerges, serves as a kind of integrating ‘difference-spacing-openness’ at the heart of perceptual experience. This living in-between, understood as creative and ‘fulfilling emptiness’ is the speaking and knowing silence that is pregnant with meaning; a “pregnancy of the possible, Weltmöglichkeit, the possible world variants of this world, the world beneath the singular and the plural” (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 250). As a ‘fullness of void’, this dehiscence is a kind of creative hollowness that is full in its barrenness of potential meaning.⁴

This ‘immanent-transcending’ inter-play of differentiation and integration through a living in-between forms what the poet Wallace Stevens called ‘*inter-
ing*’ by expressive articulations, gesticulations and re-integrations. The inter-relational and embodied, enfleshed understanding and filled void as developed by Merleau-Ponty has been present in Asian and Eastern spiritualities and wisdom tradition, especially those that integrate the body, for example (tantric) Yoga as somatic contemplative praxis, (Sarukkai 2002; Morley 2001, 2008) or cultivating

sustain the integration of focus of these spheres as well as wholes and parts; unities and differences etc., where ambiguity is not merely repressed, but included and embraced (Todres 2000: 234). In such embodied spirituality, ambiguity reconciles with its source, spacious stillness, and the emergent ‘stillness in chaotic motion’ (Combs 1995). If we understand that ontological ambiguity and its hermeneutics describes an existential revealing task that works itself out bodily and historically in human and evolutionary developments that participates in a non-deterministic openness and freedom, through which a being-in-becoming unfolds. Attending to, and dwelling with, ambiguities—while recognising them as ambiguities, not simply conflicts to be resolved—can open possibilities for enriching organizational life and make it more meaningful. Even more “good ambiguity” (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 11) can be found by recognizing the salient function of expression, in which we find a spontaneity that offers the possibility of authenticity, that is, the possibility of speaking and listening imaginatively, poetically, yet with integrity. Such lived ambiguity possibilizes an authentic voice, an authentic way of Being-in-the-World as a communicating subjectivity within relational or social performances (Eicher-Catt 2005: 127, 132).

⁴Interestingly, late postmodern and post-postmodern worldviews were also exploring a productive void as an absent present (of a living energy) that is a “pre-positive constructing process, empty in itself’ connected to a non-identifiable awareness, or even something like ‘pure consciousness’, however it may be designated” (Benedikter and Molz 2011: 57). “Postmodern spiritual awareness is scientific and primordial, originating in the bio-cognitive ‘fact’ of creative void” (Schreiber 2012: 7).

primordial life-energy ‘Qi’ (Carey 2000; Yasuo 1993). Furthermore, Merleau-Pontyan relational-processual ontology is connected to philosophies of ‘*in-betweenism*’ (Kimura 1988) or ‘*inter-being*’ (Hanh 1998), particularly the Buddhist concept of dependent co-origination or co-arising of phenomena (pratītya-samutpāda) (Berman 2004; Park and Kopf 2009: 4) and flesh of the world as decentering and deconstructing ‘emptiness’ (Mazis 2009).

Overall, Merleau-Ponty’s key process philosophical concepts of living body and dynamic inter-corporeality as well as the reversible, chiasmic Flesh provide the basis for what might be called an ethos of ‘inter-be(com)ing’. Being a kind of proto-integral philosophy (Küpers 2015a, b: 79), Merleau-Ponty understanding of inter-being is chiasmically interrelated with nature and its plants, organisms and animals, who all ‘inter-are’ and ‘inter-be-come’. This means that all inter-relational processes of ‘Earth-bodies’ (Mazis 2002) are always on the move between order and disorder, that is, never complete but always becoming. Such ongoing becoming is not a retro-romanticism nor corporeal neo-idealism. Rather, an a-romantic approach implies an active-passive and ambiguous interplay between immanence and transcendence that is not leading to a unitive monism.⁵ Through our sensing, perceiving and thinking bodies we are entwined with the natural and cultural world in such a way that there is a “relationship of intercorporeity with the biosphere and all animality” (Merleau-Ponty 2003: 334–335). With this inter-relational orientation, Merleau-Ponty’s dynamic incarnationalism is proto-spiritual⁶ and carrying a utopian movement (Johnson 2003) of what is not yet; or about what could be imagined, leading to a future-oriented engagement in the presence as heuristic

⁵In a certain way, Flesh subverts both immanence and transcendence, (as concepts that depend on a dualistic structure of bifurcation and thus on each other, sedimented with meanings which obscure, than reveal) by making or letting everything be(com)ing inseparable en-fleshed. Incarnationally, as much as immanence is inherently transcending, transcendence emerges as a possibility of, dwells and unfolds in this very world, both being and becoming mutually implicated (co-implicated). Ultimately, if the world is realized and recognized as flesh, the thought of immanence becomes redundant, as does the thought of transcendence as the earthly enfleshed world and any words or expression about it are always ‘imminent-trans-a-de-cending’, always on the limen, neither absent nor fully present. Merleau-Ponty’s ontological story scandalises our already-existing stories and our established categories. As much as these function for the separation of things, and making distinctions that certainly initiated a tremendous advance in human understanding and living, we are called for learning to put nature and logos, things and thoughts, body and consciousness as well as lives and strives, leadingly forward back together, without replacing dualisms with an undifferentiated, monistic unity.

⁶As Merleau-Ponty stated “For me, philosophy consists in giving another name to what has long been crystallized under the name of God” (Merleau-Ponty 2007: 240), while he bids adieu to the God of metaphysics and traditional religion. Merleau-Ponty’s proto-anatheistic (Kearney 2010) attitude seems ultimately to be one of gratitude, humility, and wonder before the entwined oneness and multiplicity of Being as he has been enthralled by a kind of numinosity of nature, perceptual faith, communion, the hidden and revealed source of being and the miracles of creativity. Accordingly, affinities between Merleau-Pontian phenomenology and certain mystical schools have been made (Akhtar 2010).

and playful probing of new possibilities. This approach is relevant for organizations as life-world of an embodied and enfolded and mindful inter-practice.

7 Enfolded 'Organic-izations' and Embodied Mindful Inter-practices

Merleau-Ponty's process philosophical orientation allows enriched explorations of various phenomena of elemental and enfolded organizing or 'organic-izations', with their reversible and dynamic inter-constitutions (Cecil 2004) that are connected to an embodied spirituality. In the life-world of organization, Flesh operates as an intermediating, open-ended, soma-significative medium and reversible, often dialogical exchange as chiasmic wave-like flow and entwinement, for example between embodied selves and others (Cataldi 1993: 69). This relational reversible Flesh constitutes in-between spaces and times in organizations (Bradbury and Lichtenstein 2000), which include various interwoven processes and feedback loops as they emerge in practices (Calori 2002; Lukenchuk 2006). Shotter (2003, 2004) has described the living, chiasmically organized, and dynamic intertwined relations with their concrete spontaneous, dialogical, and expressive-responsiveness of moving bodies in relation to orchestrated change in organizations, allowing a 'witness-thinking' that co-creates an 'action guiding' sense from within lived and living experience of shared circumstances (Shotter 2006).

Providing possibilities for an unfolding in-betweenness, Flesh in organizing serves as a generative capacity and generous source (Diprose 2002), enacted as a corporeal generosity of embodied mutual recognition in organizational life-worlds (Hancock 2008) or for understanding co-created and reversible roles of leading and following (Ladkin 2010: 71–73; 182–183). The key concept of chiasmic organizing and 'in-between' of Flesh can be used for post-dichotomous interpretations and post-dualistic orientation in organization studies and practice, especially in relation to conflicts and transformations or dealing with VUCA-related dimensions like disunity, ambiguities, dilemmas, and paradoxes (Küpers 2015a, b: 197–236).

Considering the corporeality of practice-based dimensions (Yakhlef 2010) and following Merleau-Ponty's relational process perspective, spirituality can be interpreted in relation to its co-constituting embodied pheno-practice and '*inter-practices*' in organizations and leadership (Küpers 2007, 2011b, 2013) that helps to interpret and reshape the nexus of being, feeling, knowing, doing, sharing, structuring, and effectuating in and through embodied actions, both individually and collectively.

While defying direct control and eluding manageability, these embodied inter-practices can be designed for that is, enabled and encouraged. What can be done practically is to prepare and offer supportive conditions that engender targeted facilitations on a situation-specific basis. This includes forms of cultivating an attentional openness with and to the empathising body (Csordas 1993) and practical responsabilisation by which embodied moments of proto-spiritual practices flourish in organisations. Conditions that make it more likely that organizational members

will become aware of and attuned to the actual or possible suffering of a colleague as well as those that enable empathic concern and responding—including its speed, scope, scale and customization—are critical for the activation of compassion (Dutton et al. 2006; Lilius et al. 2011).

Building on the described spiritually potent in-between the capacity for learning in organisations with regard to developing an ‘inter-ethics’ (Abma et al. 2010) depends on the ability to nurture between-times and between-places for the co-creation of value in different constellations (Berthoin-Antal 2006). In this context, sensitive ways of arts-based learning (Taylor and Ladkin 2009) are helpful. These are drawing on various techniques, like drawing or painting, collage, sound, poetry, narratives, role-play or other art-forms to embody aspects of experience that are then available to develop expressive sensibility and a spiritually and morally refined sense- and decision-making as well as transformative learning. To realise embodied spiritual inter-practices, organisational members require having access to available material, financial but also affective, emotional, cognitive and social resources that refers to political implications (Küpers 2015a).

For realizing an embodied spirituality inter-practice requires the cultivation of mindfulness. For some time, mindfulness in organization (e.g. Jordan et al. 2009; Reb and Atkins 2015; Dane and Brummel 2014), its various effects (Dane and Brummel 2014; Glomb et al. 2011) and uses and misuses (Reb et al. 2015: 257) for example in form of a ‘McMindfulness’ (Hyland 2015) have been researched critically. The latter one is another manifestation, of taking over spirituality (Carrette and King 2005) and treating it as a resource or means to be manipulated instrumentally for organizational ends and commercial profit as well as to harness, manage and control the soul of employees (Case and Gosling 2010).

Incorporating in everyday life of organizations the inter-relational dimensions of an embodied and en fleshed be(com)ing connected with the affective and meaning-giving ethical principles (Williams and Kabat-Zinn 2013), a mindful workplace (Chaskalson 2011) can emerge through practitioners that reconcile organizational mindfulness and mindful organizing (Vogus and Sutcliffe 2012).

8 Conclusion

Building on a phenomenological approach to embodied spirituality and integrating re-membering of “self-other-things” and discussing an en fleshed “integral being” related to ‘organic-izations’ this chapter opened up possibilities for a processual inter-becoming as and through organizing, under conditions of VUCA. As outlined, Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy of chiasmic ‘flesh-in-betweenness’, with its reversibilities, crisscrossing and inter-corporeity, provides the base for an ethos of this relational be(com)ing as an un-, inter-, and re-folding of an embodied spirituality. Furthermore it offers possibilities for approaching a participatory spiritual culture and practical ‘sacred science’ that is serving a transformative, epistemic and political flourishing (Heron 2006) and a proto-integral ‘scientia media’ (Robbins

2001) being able to process the ‘divine’ immanence as mutual co-creation between ‘presences’ (Heron 2006: 10).

If conventional dualistic views and corresponding actions in the world have gradually but inevitably led to its disenchantment then Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy might be read as the movement of a non-regressive expressive (re-)enchantment, a new ‘singing’ in and through the world. With his approach we can relate to a world, prior to the distancing culturally constructed ‘naturalistic’ attitude that sees trees as exploitable resources towards a non-superstitious de-anthropocentric, proto-animistic relationship, which precisely sees the trees looking back at us within an interdependent web of earthly life in a ‘Spell of the Sensuous’ (Abram 1996).

The becoming-of-organizing and its re-integrated members are in co-evolving inter-relationship with all phenomena that affect and are affected, thus they each co-arise interdependently. Thereby, organizational members, a group, or the entire organization with its stake-holders, ‘inter-become’ in their embodied spirituality, as they are inexorably en-twined in moves of re-turning forward. Putting into practice an enfolded understanding of spirituality opens up possibilities for future studies and experimental practices about bodily ‘how’s’ of organizing, especially as inter-practicing. On the one hand, such an approach helps to critique disembodied orientations that neglect bodies and embodiments related to spirituality; or merely seeing them as instrumentalized resources or objects for an utilitarian ‘practicalism’ within the context of neo-liberal corporate life, bounded by power relations of capitalist socio-economic transactions.

On the other hand, focusing on embodied inter-practices of spirituality may contribute to the emergence of *alter-native* forms of organizational practices. ‘*Alter-native*’ here refers to literally ‘other-birthly’ ways of living, entailing socio-cultural-political and moral dimensions and issues. A creative ethics and spirituality as embodied practice allows a ‘provisional imperative’ as it relates to transgressivity, irony, and imagination in order to make the impossible possible (Woermann 2013: 32, 45–47, 76–84). When such a creative approach is combined with circumstantial and circumspective orientation than this becomes even more relevant as today’s organisations are situated in increasingly complex, often paradoxical and dilemmatic settings of VUCA. Furthermore, actualizing an embodied practice may facilitate the cultivation of practical well-being and wisdom in organizations (Küpers 2005, 2007) that is including an engagement for non- or more-than human forms of living.

Re-membering the living experience of bodily inter-practicing through an ongoing ‘inter-be (com)ing’ of an enacted spirituality is a challenging endeavor, and as such a demanding quest with many open questions. But this undertaking is a worthwhile one, as it contributes to more integrally transformative and sustainable realisations in the current interdependent worlds of organization and beyond. This reviving of embodied inter-relationships in organizational life-worlds and its stakeholders may mediate the incarnation of *alternative* economic, political, societal, and ethical relationships and realities of the economy and civic society as well as nature to inter-be-come. Following the paradox of expression (Merleau-Ponty 1995: 144), moving between sedimented and new meanings, possibilities and

futures might be launched that are called to be responded for, and thus co-create processually and be approached phenomenologically. Importantly, all enactments of an embodied and responsive inter-be(com)ing of spirit(-uality) in practically wise organization require to be realized with an ethos of engaged letting-go (Gelassenheit) as an enacted self-management practice.⁷

⁷“Gelassenheit” translated as releasement, serenity, composure or detachment refers to a non-objectifying ethos of active and ongoing passivity. This ethos entails an attitude of accepting by a careful ‘letting’ that is an abandonment of habitual, representational and appropriating orientations as well as corresponding actions. This bearing appears as very challenging in contemporary organization and leadership with its performance-driven ‘practicalism’ and corresponding constraints. But it is exactly because of this increasingly unviable form that Gelassenheit is and will become even more urgently needed for a more sustainable present and future. In this letting-be also of things, practitioners in organization do not attempt to manipulate, master or compel. Instead, in a post-heroic mode, practitioner and practices let things appear and process in their revealing and vital ways. Importantly, this is not indifference or lack of interest in things, but rather an ‘engaged letting’. This letting orientates towards ‘rescuing’ things and experiences from appropriating projection and totalising closures of enframing. Entering a modus of letting-be is realized through a receptive waiting and listening, thus more an ‘active non-doing’ in relation to things and what ‘matters’, rather than a willing and controlling business as usual. Specifically, it moves from a representational and calculative mode towards more poetic relations, intermediated via a presencing, atmospheric sensitivity and proto-meditative tuning.

Proto-meditative embodied minding, calls for patience and silence, being in relation to all doing. It presupposes that organizational members step back and recollect themselves. It requires conditions in which they can practice ‘open-minded sensing, listening and looking. It is a kind of awareness that we or they experience when we truly, unselfishly love someone or something—when we love the truth. Through the cultivation of Gelassenheit, “we silence habitual and calculative modes of thinking and open ourselves to the prompting that come from the ontological depth of the becoming of other beings. This openness clears a space for the Being of the other to emerge as is in itself. . . preserving the other’s irreducible otherness” (Carey 2000: 27–28). Through Gelassenheit it may be possible to suspend or at least becoming aware and redirect instrumental modes of thinking and routinized behaving. Thereby it becomes possible to openly receive promptings that come from the uplifting depth of other beings in their otherness. This receptive openness clears a space and time for the be(com)ing of an othering to emerge. In preserving the other’s irreducible otherness, organizational members preserve their own integrity, while deepening their experiences also in relation to things and what they mean. By stepping back away from or out of customary and habitual representations of beings within the horizon of objectivity with its limited, quick-fixing hastening operations, Gelassenheit allows them to enter into a letting mode that is not in a hurry to impose its ordering and grasp on things. Thus, such orientation is not on a mission to pursue the modernist project of putting questions to phenomena and forcing them to answer or being exploited or ill-treated. While viewing things and others not in a biased or appropriating way, cultivating releasement towards them enables to say care-fully ‘yes’ and/or ‘no’ to what happens in organisational practices. Thereby, it is discouraging mindless organizing or exploitive misusing practices. Developing a relatively free relationship to what appears does not mean to aspire for a life free from usages of resources or devices, for example of information- and communication technologies, but instead leading a life that is not pervasively ordered or penetrated respectively addicted to them. Designated times for email or email sabbatical respectively deliberate time away from your devices, as well as more mindful usages of mobile-phones and other media for a wiser form of connectivity are practical ways of realizing this. The practical side of Gelassenheit denotes an incarnated and collective attitude and attunement that express a mode of comportment towards reality that does not reify the world into a

While being a perpetually critical (self-) reflection and unfinished, and thus a continuous provisional ‘science of beginnings’ (Stewart and Mickunas 1990: 5), phenomenology enacted as an ‘inter-pheno-practice’ (Küpers 2009) has a ‘*re-evolutionary*’ potential. This can be activated not only for the transition towards a post-capitalistic value-driven economy (Bouckaert and Zsolnai 2011), but even more for re-constellating *re-evolutional* enfoldments towards a more integral ‘inter-be(com)ing-in-the-world’ as spiraling moments and movements of an aborning cosmos.

Reflective Questions

1. How do you experience your senses and embodied sense-making in your organizational everyday life?
2. What role does your perceiving, feeling, thinking and acting body play in managing and organizing your daily work and relationships?
3. What does the nexus of self, other and world mean for you at your work-place concretely?
4. How do you sense or co-create in-between places and times in your organization?

References

- Abma, T. A., Baur, V. E., Molewijk, B., & Widdershoven, G. (2010). Inter-ethics: Towards an interactive and interdependent bioethics. *Bioethics*, 24(5), 242–255.
- Abram, D. (1996). *The spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than human world*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Akhtar, S. (2010). *The paradox of nature Merleau-Ponty's semi-naturalistic. Critique of Husserlian phenomenology*. Unpublished PhD, Marquette University.
- Alvesson, M., & Spicer, A. (2012). A stupidity-based theory of organizations. *Journal of Management Studies*, 49(7), 1194–1220.
- Bell, E. (2008). Towards a critical spirituality of organization. *Culture and Organization*, 14, 293–307.
- Bell, E., & Taylor, S. (2016). Spirituality, religion and organization. In R. Mir, H. Willmott, & M. Greenwood (Eds.), *Routledge companion to philosophy in organization studies* (pp. 550–558). London: Routledge.
- Benedikter, R. (2005). *Postmodern spirituality: A dialogue in five parts*. Viewed October 08, 2009, from <http://www.integralworld.net/benedikter5.html>
- Benedikter, R., & Molz, M. (2011). The rise of neo-integrative worldviews: Towards a rational spirituality for the coming planetary civilization? In M. Hartwig & J. Morgan (Eds.), *Critical realism and spirituality* (pp. 29–74). London: Routledge, Taylor.
- Benson, B., & Wirzba, N. (2010). *Words of life: New theological turns in French phenomenology*. New York: Fordham University Press.

containable totality. Rather, as creative nexus of a ‘form-media’ it engenders a poetic sense of (be-)longing together based on heterogeneity, rather than symmetry and of the disclosive nature of the physical with its or re-presentations of things as static substances self-showing dynamisms and sensuous particularities in all its appearances.

- Berman, M. (2004). Merleau-Ponty and Nagarjuna: Relational social ontology and the ground of ethics. *Asian Philosophy*, 14(2), 131–145.
- Berthoin-Antal, A. (2006). Reflections on the need for between-times and between-places. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 15(2), 154–116.
- Bouckaert, L., & Zsolnai, L. (2011). Spirituality and business. In L. Bouckaert & L. Zsolnai (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of spirituality and business* (pp. 3–10). London: Palgrave.
- Bradbury, H., & Lichtenstein, B. (2000). Relationality in organizational research: Exploring the space between. *Organization Science*, 11, 551–564.
- Calori, R. (2002). Organizational development and the ontology of creative dialectical evolution. *Organization*, 9(1), 127–150.
- Carey, S. (2000). Cultivating ethos through the body. *Human Studies*, 23, 23–42.
- Carrette, J., & King, R. (2005). *Selling spirituality: The silent takeover of religion*. London: Routledge.
- Case, P., & Gosling, J. (2010). The spiritual organization: Critical reflections on the instrumentality of workplace spirituality. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 7(4), 257–282.
- Cataldi, S. (1993). *Emotion, depth and flesh: A study of sensitive space. Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of embodiment*. Albany, NY: SUNY.
- Cecil, P. (2004). Changing cultures in organizations: A process of organicization. *Congrescence*, 5(101), 1445–4297.
- Chaskalson, M. (2011). *The mindful workplace*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Combs, A. (1995). *The radiance of being: Complexity, Chaos and the evolution of consciousness*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.
- Cox, J. (2006). *A guide to the phenomenology of religion: Key figures, formative influences and subsequent debates*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Csordas, T. (1993). Somatic modes of attention. *Cultural Anthropology*, 8(2), 135–156.
- Cunha, M. P., Rego, A., & D'Oliveira, T. (2006). Organizational spiritualities: An ideology-based typology. *Business & Society*, 45(2), 211–234.
- Dall'Alba, (2009). Learning professional ways of being: Ambiguities of becoming. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(1), 34–45.
- Dane, E., & Brummel, B. J. (2014). Examining workplace mindfulness and its relations to job performance and turnover intention. *Human Relations*, 67(1), 10–128.
- Dent, E., Higgins, M. E., & Wharff, D. (2005). Spirituality in organizations: An empirical review of definitions and other embedded assumptions. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16(5), 625–653.
- Dillon, M. C. (1988). *Merleau-Ponty's ontology*. Evanston, IL: NorthWestern University Press.
- Diprose, R. (2002). *Corporeal generosity*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Dutton, J. E., Worline, M. C., Frost, P. J., & Lilius, J. M. (2006). Explaining compassion organizing. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 51(1), 59–96.
- Edwards, M. G. (2004). Good for business: An integral theory perspective on spirituality in organisations. *Journal of Spirituality in Leadership and Management Journal*, 1, 5–20.
- Eicher-Catt, D. (2005). The authenticity in ambiguity. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 13(2), 113–134.
- Eeke, E. C. (2010). Phenomenological approach to the study of religion: A historical perspective. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 44(2), 266–274.
- Eliade, M. (1987). *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion* (W. R. Trask, Trans.). San Diego, CA: Harcourt.
- Ferrer, J. N. (2006). Embodied spirituality: Now and then. In *Tikkun: Culture, spirituality, politics* (pp. 41–45).
- Ferrer, J. (2008a). What does it really mean to live a fully embodied spiritual life? *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 27, 1–11.
- Ferrer, J. (2008b). Spiritual knowing as participatory enaction: An answer to the question of religious pluralism. In J. N. Ferrer & J. H. Sherman (Eds.), *The participatory turn: Spirituality, mysticism, religious studies* (pp. 135–169). Albany, NY: SUNY.

- Flood, G. (1999). *Beyond phenomenology: Rethinking the study of religion*. London and New York: Cassell.
- Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 693–727.
- Giacalone, R. A., & Jurkiewicz, C. L. (Eds.). (2002). *Handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance*. New York: Sharpe.
- Glomb, T. M., Duffy, M. K., Bono, J. E., & Yang, T. (2011). Mindfulness at work. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 30, 115–157.
- Hancock, P. (2008). Embodied generosity and an ethics of organization. *Organization Studies*, 29(10), 1357–1373.
- Hancock, P. (2009). Management and colonization in everyday life. In P. Hancock & M. Tyler (Eds.), *The management of everyday life* (pp. 1–20). London: Palgrave.
- Hanh, T. N. (1998). *Interbeing: Fourteen guidelines for engaged Buddhism*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax.
- Heron, J. (2006). *Participatory spirituality: A farewell to authoritarian religion*. Morrisville, NC: Lulu Press.
- Hicks, D. A. (2003). *Religion and the workplace: Pluralism, spirituality, leadership*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of european sciences and transcendental phenomenology*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Hyland, T. (2015). McMindfulness in the workplace: Vocational learning and the commodification of the present moment. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 67(2), 219–234.
- Johnson, G. (2003). Merleau-Pontian phenomenology as non-conventionally utopian. *Human Studies*, 26, 383–400.
- Jordan, S., Messner, M., & Becker, A. (2009). Reflection and mindfulness in organizations: Rationales and possibilities for integration. *Management Learning*, 40, 465–473.
- Kearney, R. (2010). *Anatheism: Returning to god after god*. New York: Columbia.
- Kimura, B. (1988). *Aida*. Kobundo: Tokyo.
- Kleinberg-Levin, M. (1985). *Body's recollection of being*. New York: Routledge.
- Kleinberg-Levin, M. (2008). *Before the voice of reason: Echoes of responsibility in Merleau-Ponty's ecology and Levinas's ethics*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Küpers, W. (2005). Phenomenology and integral pheno-practice of embodied well-be(com)ing in organizations. *Culture and Organization*, 11(3), 221–231.
- Küpers, W. (2007). Integral pheno-practice of wisdom in management and organization. *Social Epistemology*, 22(4), 169–193.
- Küpers, W. (2009). Perspective on integral 'Pheno-Pragma-Practice' in organizations. *International Journal of Management Practice*, 4(1), 27–50.
- Küpers, W. (2010). Inter-places—Embodied spaces and places of and for leader-/followership—Phenomenological perspectives on relational localities and tele-presences of leading and following. *Environment, Space, Place Journal*, 2(1), 79–121.
- Küpers, W. (2011a). Integral responsibilities for a responsive and sustainable practice in organizations and management. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management Journal*, 18(3), 137–150.
- Küpers, W. (2011b). Trans-+Form—Transforming transformational leadership for a creative change practice. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(1), 20–40.
- Küpers, W. (2013). The art of practical wisdom—Phenomenology of an embodied, wise inter-practice in organisation and leadership. In W. Küpers & D. Pauleen (Eds.), *A handbook of practical wisdom. Leadership, organization and integral business practice* (pp. 19–45). London: Gower.
- Küpers, W. (2014a). To be physical is to 'inter-be-come'. Beyond empiricism and idealism towards embodied leadership that matters. In D. Ladkin & S. Taylor (Eds.), *'Physicality of leadership', gesture, entanglement, taboo, possibilities* (pp. 83–108). London: Emerald.

- Küpers, W. (2014b). Embodied inter-be(com)ing—The contribution of Merleau-Ponty's relational ontology for a processual understanding of chiasmic organising. In J. Helin, T. Hernes, D. Hjorth, & R. Holt (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of process philosophy and organization studies* (pp. 413–431). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Küpers, W. (2015a). *Phenomenology of the embodied organization*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Küpers, W. (2015b). Embodied responsive ethical practice: The contribution of Merleau-Ponty for a corporeal ethics in organisations. *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies (EJBO)*, *B*, 20(1), 30–45.
- Küpers, W. (2016). Inter-integralism—Critical perspectives on advanced and adequate phenomenology and 'pheno-practice' for integral research. In S. Esbjörn-Hargens (Ed.), *True but partial essential critiques of integral theory*. Albany, NY: The State University of New York Press, SUNY.
- Küpers, W., & Pauleen, D. (2015). Learning wisdom: Embodied and artful approaches to management education. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *31*, 493–500.
- Küpers, W., & Statler, M. (2008). Practically wise leadership: Towards an integral understanding. *Culture and Organization*, *14*(4), 379–400.
- Ladkin, D. (2010). *Rethinking leadership: A new look at old leadership questions*. Cheltenham: Elgar.
- Leder, D. (1990). *The absent body*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Lilius, J. M., Worline, M. C., Dutton, J. E., Kanov, J., Maitlis, S., & Frost, P. (2011). Understanding compassion capability. *Human Relations*, *64*(7), 873–899.
- Long, B., & Helms-Mills, J. (2010). Workplace spirituality, contested meaning, and the culture of organization. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *23*(3), 325–341.
- Lukenchuk, A. (2006). Traversing the chiasms of lived experiences: Phenomenological illuminations for practitioner research. *Educational Action Research International Journal*, *14*(3), 423–435.
- Mack, O., & Khare, A. (2015). Perspectives on a VUCA world. In O. Mack, A. Khare, et al. (Eds.), *Managing in a VUCA world* (pp. 3–19). Berlin: Springer.
- Mazis, G. A. (2002). *Earthbodies, rediscovering our planetary senses*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Mazis, G. (2009). The flesh of the world is emptiness and emptiness is the flesh of the world. In J. Park & G. Kopf (Eds.), *Merleau-Ponty and Buddhism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1964a). *The primacy of perception and other essays on phenomenology, psychology, the philosophy of art, history and politics*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1964b). *Sense and nonsense*. Evanston, IL: North-Western University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1995). *The visible and the invisible*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2003). *Nature*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2007). In L. Lawlor & T. Toadvine (Eds.), *The MerleauPonty reader*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2012). *Phenomenology of perception* (D. A. Landes, Trans.). London, New York: Routledge.
- Moreau, S. A. (2001). Phenomenology of religion. In W. A. Elwell (Ed.), *Evangelical dictionary of theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Morley, J. (2001). Inspiration and expiration: Yoga practice through Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body. *Philosophy East and West*, *51*(1), 73–82.
- Morley, J. (2008). Embodied consciousness in tantric yoga and the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty. *Religion and the Arts*, *12*(1–3), 144–163.
- Nelson, J. (2009). Phenomenological approaches to religion and spirituality. *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*, *II*, 103–142.

- Nicolini, D., Gherardi, S., & Yanow, D. (2003). *Knowing in organizations: A practice-based approach*. Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe.
- Park, J. Y., & Kopf, G. (2009). *Merleau-Ponty and Buddhism*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Reb, J., & Atkins, P. W. B. (2015). Introduction. In J. Reb & P. W. B. Atkins (Eds.), *Mindfulness in organizations* (pp. 1–16). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reb, J., Sim, S., Chintakananda, K., & Bhawe, D. P. (2015). Leading with mindfulness. In J. Reb & P. W. B. Atkins (Eds.), *Mindfulness in organizations* (pp. 256–284). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reynolds, J. (2008). The implicit and presupposed theological turn in phenomenology. *SOPHIA*, 47, 261–263.
- Robbins, B. D. (2001). Scientia media, incommensurability, and interdisciplinary space. *Janus Head*, 3, 67–83.
- Sallis, J. (1973). *Phenomenology and the return to beginnings*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Sandberg, J., & Dall’Alba, G. (2009). Returning to practice anew: A life-world perspective. *Organization Studies*, 30(12), 1349–1368.
- Sarukkai, S. (2002). Inside/outside: Merleau-Ponty/Yoga. *Philosophy East and West*, 52(4), 459–478.
- Schreiber, D. A. (2012). On the epistemology of postmodern spirituality. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 33(1), 1–8.
- Sharma, A. (2001). *To the things themselves: Essays on the discourse and practice of the phenomenology of religion*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Shilling, C. (1993). *The body and social theory*. London: Sage.
- Shotter, J. (2003). cartesian change, chiasmic change: The power of living expression. *Janus Head*, 6(1), 6–29.
- Shotter, J. (2004). Responsive expression in living bodies: The power of invisible ‘real presences’ within our everyday lives together. *Cultural Studies*, 2–3, 443–460.
- Shotter, J. (2006). Understanding process from within: An argument for ‘witness-’thinking. *Organization Studies*, 27, 585–604.
- Steinbock, A. (2007). *Phenomenology and mysticism: The verticality of religious experience, Indiana series in the philosophy of religion*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Stewart, D., & Mickunas, A. (1990). *Exploring phenomenology: A guide to the field and its literature* (2nd ed.). Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.
- Styhre, A. (2004). The (re)embodied organization: Four perspectives on the body in organizations. *Human Resource Development International*, 7(1), 101–116.
- Taylor, S., & Ladkin, D. (2009). Understanding arts-based methods in managerial development. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 8(1), 55–69.
- Todres, L. A. (2000). Embracing ambiguity: Transpersonal development and the phenomenological tradition. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 39(3), 227–237.
- Todres, L. (2007). *Embodied enquiry: Phenomenological Touchstones for research, psychotherapy and spirituality*. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave.
- Tourish, D., & Tourish, N. (2010). Spirituality at work, and its implications for leadership and followership: A post-structuralist perspective. *Leadership*, 5, 207–224.
- Tracey, P. (2012). Religion and organization: A critical review of current trends and future directions. *Academy of Management Annals*, 6(1), 87–134.
- van der Leeuw, G. (1963). *Religion in essence and manifestation: A study in phenomenology*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Vogus, T., & Sutcliffe, K. (2012). Organizational mindfulness and mindful organizing: A reconciliation and path forward. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11, 722–735.
- Washburn, M. (2003). *Embodied spirituality in a sacred world*. Albany, NY: University of New York Press.
- Williams, J. M. G., & Kabat-Zinn, J. (Eds.). (2013). *Mindfulness: Diverse perspectives on its meaning. Origins and applications*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- Woermann, M. (2013). *On the (im)possibility of business ethics critical complexity, deconstruction, and implications for understanding the ethics of business*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Yakhlef, A. (2010). The corporeality of practice-based learning. *Organization Studies*, 31(4), 409–430.
- Yasuo, Y. (1993). *The body, self-cultivation, and Ki-energy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Wendelin Küpers is Professor of Leadership and Organization Studies at Karlsruhochschule—International University in Karlsruhe, Germany. Combining a phenomenological and cross-disciplinary orientation, his research focuses on embodied, emotional and creative, respectively transformational dimensions in relation to more responsible, sustainable and wiser forms of organizing and managing. Furthermore, his re-search focuses on integrating artful and aesthetic dimensions of practical wisdom and spirituality into organization and leadership. He published in a number of leading academic journals and edited volumes and is an editor of a book series on “Practical Wisdom, Leadership, Organization and integral Business Practice”. His recently published book offers a “Phenomenology for Embodied Organization”.

Simplicity in Dutch Initiatives on Food, Care and Money

Elisabeth Hense

1 Brief Descriptions of the Nine Initiatives

Reflections on the [volatility](#), uncertainty, [complexity](#) and/or [ambiguity](#) of food, care and money systems in the Netherlands have led to some promising projects which claim to prepare for alternative realities by addressing new possibilities. I interviewed nine initiators of such projects in 2013: three playing a part in new ways of food supply; three concerned with new policies for healthcare; and three coming up with interesting ideas about alternative money systems. Details about these initiatives and an analysis of their central spiritual features are given elsewhere (Hense [2015](#)). I will confine myself here to brief portraits of these nine initiatives (cf. also Hense [2017](#)).

1.1 Uit Je Eigen Stad: From Your Own Town (de Leede [2013](#))

In many Dutch cities human beings have become almost completely detached from food production, and food chains are precarious and non-transparent. These conditions have led to uncertainties about the quality of food, workplaces and the environment. With their city farm *From Your Own Town* in Rotterdam, Huibert de Leede and Johan Bosman show that there are alternatives. By combining their farm with a shop, a conference room and a restaurant, they have embedded food production in other activities, showing the interdependence of various food variables. People start to realize where their food comes from and how it is cultivated; they get information about how to grow their own food; and they can taste new recipes with food from their own region. Huibert and Johan produce a

E. Hense (✉)

Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Radboud University, Erasmusplein 1,
6525 HT Nijmegen, The Netherlands
e-mail: e.hense@ftr.ru.nl

great diversity of food—more than 50 vegetables—at prices people can afford and, besides agriculture, they also keep livestock—chickens, pigs and fish. By combining the cycles of production and waste in agriculture and livestock farming, they have made visible the natural abundance of food resources in Rotterdam. Huibert and Johan have set up their farm on an ugly abandoned rail yard in the city and so transformed a neglected part of the city into a pleasant environment where people like to relax and to enjoy a luxuriant garden. In this way, they have addressed a range of issues to contribute to a new unambiguous and simple life in Dutch cities, a life with more sustainable conditions for food and environment (Bronsvelt 2014).

1.2 Hotspot Hutspot: Hot Spot Hodge-Podge (Richters 2013)

Many children in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Rotterdam struggle with low self-esteem. Bob Richters wants to give them a safe and happy place to develop themselves and to get positive experiences. He has set up small restaurants, called *Hot spot Hodge-podge*, where children can help with the growing of vegetables and with cooking and dishing up meals for their guests. Children can do so free of obligations; they can take part just for pleasure. So the restaurants promote children's development, bring them joy and also provide them with healthy meals. Together with their guests, the children build up an inclusive community. Bob Richters does not need huge amounts of money to carry out this project. From the boxes to grow vegetables to the furniture and crockery in the restaurants—he works with second-hand materials as much as possible. The overall look of the restaurants is nevertheless very trendy and vital because of well-chosen features; he goes for biological cultivation, a professional kitchen with new materials, nice chef's jackets and aprons for the children, a huge window that is decorated attractively, a nice color scheme and surprising dishes. *Hot spot Hodge-podge* creates room for more resilience of marginalized children, and thereby for more security in an uncomplicated communal life in their neighborhoods.

1.3 Thuis Afgehaald: Shareyourmeal (Hart 2013)

This platform serving all parts of the Netherlands brings supply and demand of home-cooked meals directly together. The community of this platform wishes to avoid intermediary trade and to share meals without material profit. Many contemporaries only know this practice within their families and circles of friends. People living in the same street, neighborhood or part of town have practically disappeared from most people's social networks. With this platform they come back in a surprising and casual manner. They do not only share meals, but the social and ecological side-effects often seem even more important and reflect different trends in society: giving more attention to local food and natural food; reduced food waste; preparing and sharing home-cooked meals; and looking for community in a contemporary manner. The platform focuses on sharing food, but quietly also wants

to do something for a better world. It does not unfold ethical debates about food, but simply provides new possibilities for sharing. Co-founder Marieke Hart speaks about ‘playful, sensible’ dealing with food. The focus is on the desires and interests of people, but incidentally the platform also contributes to building up an inclusive society with special attention for people at the margins who cannot cook their own meals or who feel lonesome and useless. Without being moralizing, this platform makes a strong contribution to solid social networks and hominess in daily life.

1.4 Zorgcoöperatie Hoogeloon: Hoogeloon Care Cooperation (van der Heijden 2013)

Certain values which are appreciated by modern citizens are under pressure in the Dutch care system. Especially self-determination, being in charge of one’s own life, hominess, and security in one’s own social environment are threatened. Elderly and disabled people are forced to move to big health care institutions in other places than where they used to live. The health care system is quite bureaucratic and unwieldy with the result that many people have problems to find their way. For example, people have to fill in many forms in order to get a wheeled walker (‘rollator’) or a mobility scooter. Moreover, client files are extensive and there are many rules to be followed. The *Hoogeloon Care Cooperation*, which is active in the Dutch village of Hoogeloon, takes an alternative view on care and refuses to accept these practices. It aims to preserve care nearby, to reduce the rules in the health care system, and to realize small-scale care. In this way the cooperation tries to retain self-determination, hominess and security for everyone. This is however only possible with the help of many dedicated volunteers and special efforts from the local government and the inhabitants of the village. According to those concerned, these efforts are paying off very well, providing more simplicity in daily life for nearly every family in the village.

1.5 Unal Zorg: Unal Care (Disbudak 2013)

This institution for health care of multi-problem families in Amsterdam aims at self-supporting functioning of minor disabled persons and their families, often from a migrant background. The care provided is strongly individualized and carefully geared to the limited possibilities of the individual clients. Each social worker tailors himself/herself to the needs of his/her clients and ensures appropriate security of his/her clients in order to enhance their self-development. Central to the employees of *Unal Care* are personal care of their clients, practical help, the improvement of communication between family members, and the increase of competencies of their clients. A big challenge in this kind of work is the fact that one does not know what exactly is the problem when one starts to work with a family. The common strategy—defining the problem, following well-established work practices and achieving the objectives—is of no use in these complicated

cases. The social worker actually has to work the other way round; he/she becomes aware of what is wrong only while exploring a way out of the difficulties. Only open-end strategies appear suitable to improve the complex situations of multi-problem families.

1.6 Eigen Kracht Centrale: Own Strength Centre (van Beek 2013)

The *Own Strength Centre* advocates that citizens who are in serious trouble should first be encouraged to use the strengths of their own private circle to solve their problems before calling in professional assistance. To make your own plan with the members of your family, your friends, your neighbors and members of your church community or your club is a world-wide strategy to overcome your troubles. But can this elementary strategy also work for children and youth in contact with children and youth services? Are they good observers of their own lives and are they able to think about adequate plans to improve their circumstances? Yes, says Fiet van Beek, former director of the *Own Strength Centre*. Although confusing and unclear conditions may affect their ability to manage their own affairs, children, together with other stakeholders, can participate in the process of finding the right solutions to their problems. The *Own Strength Centre* assists people to organize private circle conferences and to set up a plan with the members of their circle. That means more personal self-determination for those who are in trouble, more security in their own private circle, and more coherence in the help offered. Professionals have an assisting and supporting role. They provide relevant information and good arguments, but the person in trouble remains the clear leader of his or her own plan for change for the better.

1.7 STRO: Social Trade Organization (Vink 2013)

STRO started at the end of the 1960s as one of the first clubs for environmental policy. Since the 1990s, the organization has completely focused on alternative money systems, because it considers our current money system as one of the main factors that cause environmental pollution. Gradually, *STRO* has also become concerned with the problem of poverty and its connection with ordinary money systems and pollution problems. Up to now, *STRO* has been working on local alternative money systems, but it wants to come up with a universal coin in the near future. Its staff has the ambition to create such an attractive alternative to the current money systems that it will become more and more accepted all over the world and will really change our way of living. They think that they have already found a suitable model, but they still have to test it in the real world. With their coin, they want to contribute to social, cultural, ecological and economic purposes: they want their coin to connect people, to support their cultural contexts, to spare their environments and to keep them out of poverty. Bearing in mind the recent financial crises that caused a lot of trouble in our world and forced many countries to rethink

their lifestyles, *STRO* hopes to contribute to a change of life by design, not by disaster.

1.8 Qoin: Qoin (Kampers 2013)

This organization shares the concerns of *STRO*. *Qoin* wants to awaken people to the fact that money systems are constructions that are often damaging in social, environmental and cultural respects. But these systems can, and should, be changed; we can think about alternative arrangements. This mind-blowing idea is spreading at the moment. Many people want to bring back the human aspect into the economy. They want to determine by themselves what is of value to them and they do not want to leave this choice to the highly abstract and obscure logic of stock markets. An alternative coin introduced by a small group of people with a vision of what ‘a good life’ might be can bring the actions, attitudes and insights of a whole community in clear harmony with its real values. Alternative money systems thus can help to solve the problems of our VUCA world. This becomes possible when people start using their money to establish their new alternative worlds by reducing waste and consumption.

1.9 Dette Glashouwer’s Theatre Productions: Dette Glashouwer: Money Money Money (Glashouwer 2013)

Theatre producer and performer Dette Glashouwer has presented her own personal struggle with money in a theatrical production. Her autobiographical performances are revealing. She tells her audience how she lost her job because of the financial crisis and how it set her thinking about money. With a sense of humor and thought-provoking brain waves, she discusses many complicated aspects of money and uncovers what problems we have with our money system. Dette calls this form of theatre ‘confessional theatre’, because she lets spectators take part in her own ethical struggles with money, including her uncomfortable feelings about her retirement fund, the products she buys, the questionable wasting of energy and materials. Dette also combines her performances with shareholder meetings, led by the economist Helen Toxopeus, giving her shareholders an opportunity to strengthen the financial basis of her productions. The spectators become fellow actors to Dette: they join in Dette’s search for ways in which we can reset our money system and bring about renewal of our society. In this way, people start thinking and become part of the movement that is looking for alternatives.

2 Forms of Simplicity That Can Be Found in These Nine Initiatives

Looking more closely at these nine initiatives, we can discern different forms of simplicity in them: simplicity in organizational structures and governance; simplicity in products and services; spiritual forms of simplicity. In the following, I will shortly comment on each of these forms of simplicity.

2.1 Simplicity in Organizational Structures and Governance

All of the initiatives discussed here are small scale organizations with <70 people employed. Looking at *From Your Own Town*, *Hot spot Hodge-pot* and *Shareyourmeal*, we see organizations with one-man or two-man leaderships, <20 employees and some bigger groups of volunteers. The authority structures are barely stratified; employees and volunteers work side by side with the leadership. With only one additional layer, the organization charts of the *Hoogeloon Care Cooperation*, *Unal Care* and *Own Strength Centre* are only slightly more complicated: the leadership is still in close contact with the shop floor. We see a general director assisted by some department managers or, in the case of *the Hoogeloon Care Cooperation*, self-managing teams running its two ‘care villas’. The group of employees is not very large, that is, under 70, and much of the work can be done by volunteers or by citizens charged with specific tasks. The alternative money projects *STRO* and *Quoin* are also small organizations working with a staff of 10–20 people. *Dette Glashouwer* also works with the assistance of only a few colleagues. With her small team, she produces one-woman shows and cooperates with an economist for her shareholder meetings. All initiators of these projects practice flat and informal collaboration, because it gives both leaders and employees more energy and allows more creativity.

With regard to governance, the *Hoogeloon Care Cooperation* has explicitly reduced rules and control practices in order to make more time for their central task, that is, the care for elderly and disabled people. *Unal Care* works without complex standard procedures and allows employees to find their own practicable methods of working in the specific circumstances of multi-problem families. The *Own Strength Centre* strives to simplify the professional assistance, which is often fragmented and therefore less effective. Conversely, the center strengthens informal, easily accessible assistance. *STRO* and *Qoin* profit from complementary collaboration forms where the leadership as well as the employees can contribute in horizontal relationships. *Dette Glashouwer* cooperates with her financial and artistic co-workers on a project-by-project basis. This means that she prefers very simple and limited structures and very direct and short lines of governance.

So in all these initiatives we see vital pioneering leadership backed up by small groups of creative, highly motivated employees or co-workers. Together they are engaged in implementing new social, ecological and cultural value clusters. They have all learned to remove unnecessary hierarchical levels and channels and they

try to avoid red tape. This approach gives these initiatives of societal renewal the best chance of success, as their material means are limited. This does not necessarily diminish their impact: they activate thousands of users, guests, clients or volunteers contributing in one way or another to the targets of their organizations.

2.2 Simplicity in Products and Services

The initiatives discussed here prefer local and affordable products, short producer-user chains, understandable and accessible services, down-to-earth solutions within one's own social context etc. All these aspects might be considered as simple, but at the same time they require complex and well thought-out planning. Making production and waste circles interlock in a smart way is no small job. The same can be said of setting up effective participation structures for families and citizens in care organizations. And surely designing local alternative currencies is anything but simple. *STRO* and *Qoin* needed many years of extensive study and testing in order to be able to set up easy-to-use alternative currencies. *Dette Glashouwer* first had to acquire a lot of knowledge about money—that is, about what money is and how it works—from books, seminars as well as conversations, before she was able to produce receptive shows about this theme. She considers it her task to translate this sophisticated subject into understandable and breezy theater shows.

Although the products and services of these initiatives are easy to use and make it very easy for clients, users, and volunteers to join in and to contribute to the values of the organizations, the development of these products and services is not that straightforward. In other words: the products and services may seem simple, but providing and maintaining them is quite a complicated task.

2.3 Spiritual Forms of Simplicity

The last form of simplicity which I want to mention here is spiritual simplicity. This form might easily slip one's mind when thinking about simplicity in the context of management. However, it does have an important impact and can be distinguished in each of the nine initiatives of societal renewal discussed. The most striking forms of spiritual simplicity in this respect are: (1) the voluntary use of personal restraint, (2) the application of unpretending or servant leadership, (3) the provision of discretionary power, and (4) the concern for ordinary and marginalized people.

- (1) All of the initiatives discussed apply personal restraint, which in some cases means earning a minimum salary or even earning nothing during the starting period (de Leede 2013). Some of the pioneers left well-paid jobs in order to finally find the time and have the energy to contribute to what they think really matters and is of value (Hart 2013). Others only work in temporary positions and resign as soon as they see an opportunity to restart their organizations (Kampers 2013). Not one of the people involved in these initiatives strives for a

high income. Some even give their private possessions as security for their enterprises or projects (Vink 2013). Voluntary moderation is a powerful means that is often employed in spiritual traditions. It gives people strength to pursue other than material values, i.e. social, cultural or ecological values. Without the spiritual practice of restraint, these other values would remain hidden. This practice helps those involved to free themselves from the predominant dependence on profit and consumerism and to dare engage in what could be called 'higher' values.

- (2) All of the initiatives discussed also apply unpretending or servant leadership. Robert Greenleaf and others have described this form of leadership as follows: the leader makes himself/herself familiar with the real needs of people and argues that he/she can contribute to a solution for their problems. In order to evaluate whether a solution is adequate, the leader will ask himself/herself: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? In the nine initiatives discussed here we can easily identify this kind of leadership: all of the initiators started from real human needs concerning food, care or money and put forward concrete plans for improvements. All of them have remained critical of their projects and carefully evaluate changes for the better in those served. And those served indeed become healthier and freer and develop their ethical, social and ecological competencies. The initiatives have therefore become attractive to many people: many join in as volunteers, clients or donators, and some even copy the solutions presented and start their own initiatives at other places. The copying of solutions is something which the leaders welcome: they think about their initiatives as one big blue ocean which should grow through joint efforts.
- (3) All of the initiatives discussed provide strong discretionary power both to their leaderships and to their staff members and target groups. The people involved in these initiatives are not willing to follow the old master plans of twentieth-century economics any longer: they anticipate a new praxis in the future and try to realize it by means of what is called '*visionary back casting*', i.e. looking backwards from a vision of a better world to be realized in the future to the present unsatisfactory situation and tentatively reconstructing the course into the future which one will have to take in order to establish that better world. This better world is a kind of elementary cultural model which seems more worthwhile, more just and more loving than our status quo capitalistic cultural model. We imagine that we could do with less material, less energy, less trash/rubbish in that better world. But there will be a need for more curiosity, more imagination and more visions to reach this alternative world. Each one of us will have to use his/her own discretionary power to make a difference and to answer the question who we want to be and what we want to contribute to bring this new world nearer and nearer. We will have to answer these questions in a humble and unpretentious way, as we have actually just started to find out this new story, while many of our contemporaries still stick to the old master plans and continue to strengthen the expansive modern VUCA world. But there is no

need for us to become cynical or passive when others do not evolve with us simultaneously. We can use our discretionary powers and we can accept our responsibility, knowing that 3–5% of the population can already bring about a decisive change (Welzer 2014) and that 20% of the adult population is sufficient to turn over our society (United Nations 1997).

- (4) The last issue of spiritual simplicity which I want to consider here is the initiators' concern for ordinary or marginalized people. This concern is evident: people from disadvantaged neighborhoods, children and youth in serious troubles (Richters 2013), elderly and disabled people (van der Heijden 2013), citizens who seek healthy food (de Leede 2013) and ethical currencies (Vink 2013; Kampers 2013), citizens living in socially and economically troubled contexts (van Beek 2013; Glashouwer 2013) etc. are the target groups of these initiatives. The initiators do not merely want to fill gaps in our society related to the needs and desires of these people, but want to transform our society into a place that is more humane for everybody. This means that those who are neglected, challenged, worried, or frustrated due to systemic weaknesses in our societies should also be included in these initiatives. In this way, a new kind of culture might be established: a culture which I would call 'cosmoculture' because of its all-encompassing inclusion of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds and its profound connectedness with local and global natural resources. Tackling our 'social messes' (Ritchey 2011) and the 'wicked problems' (Conklin 2006; Horn and Weber 2007) resulting from our failure to set up a well-functioning cosmoculture so far is however one of the most complex problems we are faced with at present.

3 What Benefits Does the Implementation of Simplicity Confer on Our Societies?

The main benefits of the implementation of simplicity in the nine initiatives discussed can be summed up in Table 1.

The simplicity in the organizational structures and governance makes the initiatives more efficient: the initiatives manage to achieve a lot with limited personal and material resources. Furthermore, the simplicity in products and services contributes to customer/client satisfaction: customers and clients are satisfied with the easily accessible, understandable and affordable high-quality products and services delivered. These two aspects seem to fit well in our common way of doing business and organizing public services. However, these nine initiatives also differ markedly from our ordinary way of behaving in that the usual practices of profit maximizing and cost minimizing are not characteristic targets of these initiatives. Instead they pursue social, ecological and cultural goals. These are the most important benefits of these initiatives and they are achieved through the utilization of spiritual forms of simplicity. The intensification of spiritual forms of simplicity—i.e. personal restraint, the application of unpretending or servant leadership, the provision of discretionary power, and the concern for

Table 1 Benefits of various initiatives mentioned in the chapter

Initiative	Benefits
From your Own Town	Local and affordable food products; short producer-user chains; clean and beauty environments; pleasant social community of producers and consumers
Hot spot Hodge-podge	Development of human capacities in marginalized children; provision of healthy and tasty meals in an inclusive community; sustainability of materials; clean and beauty surroundings in disadvantaged neighborhoods; pleasant atmosphere in problem neighborhoods
Shareyourmeal	Provision of healthy, local and divers food (especially for disabled and elderly people); reduction of waste; enjoyment of new social connectedness in anonymous individualized cities
Hoogeloon Care Cooperation	Improvement of personal freedom for elderly and disabled people; strengthening their hold on their lives; hominess, security and enjoyment in the own social community
Unal Care	Improvement of personal freedom for disabled immigrant people; strengthening their hold on their lives; better communication within problem families; better personal care; development of capacities in marginalized families
Own Strength Centre	Provision of coherence in the social care; improvement of personal freedom for children and youth in troubles; strengthening their ability to cope in their own social community; improvement of their getting hold on their own problems and the solution of their problems; provision of information, connectedness, hominess and security within their own social networks
STRO	Social, ecological, cultural and economic values—especially in crisis situations in order to prevent poverty, ecological disasters, and social and cultural harm
Qoin	Social, ecological, cultural and economic values—especially in crisis situations in order to prevent poverty, ecological disasters, and social and cultural harm
Dette Glashouwer	Openness and awakening for societal reality; authenticity; acceptance of responsibility for people, society and environment

ordinary and marginalized people—signifies a cultural shift. This shift is not only visible in the areas of food, care and money, but is also manifest in the areas of energy, housing and rights.

More and more people are looking for a reset of our seriously ill societal systems. Spiritual forms of simplicity may work as a remedy, but this remedy presupposes personal transformation of those who come up with alternative initiatives. Will there be enough people who have gone through such a personal transformation and are capable of establishing spiritual-ethical communities that can make a difference and bring about a new world of inclusive societies? Traditionally, the Christian Churches contributed to the establishment of such spiritual-ethical communities (see also Hense 2015). For example, Christian cloisters were crucial for the renewal of agriculture and gardening in the middle Ages. They were not only leading organizations engaged in the production of food, but were also important for the further development of medicine. Since the seventeenth century,

the enormous influence of Christian spirituality on the improvement of our care systems has been evident. Important personalities were Francis of Sales (1567–1622) and Jeanne de Chantal (1572–1641), who assisted their neighbors in need; Vincent of Paul (1580–1660) and Louise de Marillac (1591–1660), who worked for better conditions of orphans, slaves, sick persons and victims of wars; Jean Baptiste de la Salle (1651–1719), who erected the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in order to provide education for poor children; and the Dutch bishop Joannes Zwijsen (1794–1877), who founded the Sisters of Love and the Brothers of Tilburg. The Christian Churches have also stimulated thinking about the functions of money and capital. The social encyclical letters of the Catholic Church—*Rerum Novarum* in 1891, *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1929, and *Centesimus Annus* in 1991—stressed the human dignity (independently from material possessions); solidarity (with the poor and needy); subsidiary (self-determination where possible); and distribution (of material possessions). Given these traditions, the Christian Churches should still be able to find sufficient reason to contribute to the necessary societal renewal in the areas of food, care and money. However, the Churches seem to have lost their leading role, and secular organizations have taken over the wheel in our times. But it could also be argued that the post-Christian culture in the Netherlands is still influenced by a sediment of Christian values deposited over the centuries (van den Brink 2012).

4 Conclusion: Remarks on a Cultural Shift That Is at Hand in Our Societies

Different practices of spiritual simplicity are applied in the initiatives discussed. The initiators as well as their target groups are very positive about these practices. A new behavior is cultivated and a new life orientation is developing. Although these developments do not take place under the umbrella of religion, there is a lot of attention for well-known attributes of God according to Christian, Jewish or Muslim traditions: empathy, connectedness, respect, love, responsibility, justice etc. The initiators are sensitive to these ‘divine attributes’ and use them as criteria for societal improvement. This sensitivity still seems to be the booster for the better—even in our secular society.

The sociologist Jeremy Rifkin states that we currently witness a change in mentality: human beings learn to jointly use their resources in a spiritual-ethical way without damaging their ecosystems (Rifkin 2014). Human beings seem to lose their interest in money and to attach greater importance to the common good. Elinor Ostrom, the only woman ever who got the Nobel Prize in Economics—awarded in 2009—put forward this issue in her impressive research (Ostrom 2011). The initiatives of societal renewal in the Netherlands discussed above show that this change in mentality is in fact a question of spirituality. In other words: only the ethical-spiritual sensibility of concrete people who have the courage to think and

act in alternative ways puts flesh on the bones of this theory of a change in mentality and societal transformation.

Reflective Questions

1. How does simplicity in the organizational structures and in the governance of these nine innovative projects look like?
2. How does simplicity in the products and services of these projects look like?
3. How does spiritual simplicity in these projects look like and how could it be cultivated?
4. What are the benefits of simplicity for our societies?

References

- Bronsveld, C. (2014). *Onze oogst. Sociale effecten van Rotterdamse stadslanbouwprojecten*. Trichis: Rotterdam.
- Conklin, J. (2006). *Dialogue mapping: Building shared understanding of wicked problems*. Chichester: Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- de Leede, H. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over Uit Je Eigen Stad*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-x3a-76ks.
- Disbudak, A. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over Unalzgorg*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-z3w-r2d5.
- Glashouwer, D. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over het theaterprogramma 'Money, money, money'*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-z3f-guyu.
- Hart, M. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos en Elisabeth Hense over Thuisafgehaald*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-zhh-bd6u.
- Hense, E. (2015). *Vernieuwingsinitiatieven rond eten, zorg en geld in Nederland—Een kwestie van spiritualiteit*. Amsterdam: VU University Press.
- Hense, E. (2017). The quest for fullness of life in contexts of societal renewal—A perspective from spirituality studies. In E. Hense, C. Hübenal, & W. M. Speelman (Eds.), *The quest for quality of life*. Münster: Aschendorff (forthcoming).
- Horn, R. E., & Weber, R. P. (2007). *New tools for resolving wicked problems: Mess mapping and resolution mapping processes*. Strategy Kinetics L.L.C.
- Kampers, E. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over Qoin*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-zuk-sj6t.
- Ostrom, E. (2011). *Governing the commons. The evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richters, B. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over Hotspot Hutspot*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-24j-7c4m.
- Rifkin, J. (2014, September 16). *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.
- Ritchey, T. (2011). *Wicked problems—Social messes: Decision support modelling with morphological analysis*. Berlin: Springer.
- United Nations. (1997). *Critical trends: Global change and sustainable development*. New York: Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.
- van Beek, F. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over de Eigen Kracht Centrale*. DANS, 2014. doi:10.17026/dans-zqx-e47s.
- van den Brink, G. (2012). *De Lage Landen en het hogere. De betekenis van geestelijke beginselen in het moderne bestaan* (pp. 127–167). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

- van der Heijden, J. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over de Zorgcoöperatie Hogeloon*. DANS, 2014. doi:[10.17026/dans-xyp-ghu8](https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xyp-ghu8).
- Vink, J. (2013). *Interview van Marianne Dagevos and Elisabeth Hense over Stichting Stro*. DANS, 2014. doi:[10.17026/dans-2b7-jdtz](https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-2b7-jdtz).
- Welzer, H. (2014). *Zelf denken—Een leidraad voor verzet*. Van Arkel: Utrecht.

Elisabeth Hense, Ph.D. (2001), Radboud University Nijmegen, is Assistant Professor of Spirituality at that university. In addition, she is a trustee to the board of the newly established Carmelite Research Institute in Germany. Her topics of interest are Christian spirituality, theories on spirituality, and societal spirituality. She has published and edited many monographs and articles on these topics, including *Present-Day Spiritualities—Contrasts and Overlaps* (Brill 2014), *Vernieuwingsinitiatieven rond eten, zorg en geld in Nederland—een kwestie van spiritualiteit* (VU University Press 2015), and *Early Christian Discernment of Spirits* (Lit 2016).

Integrating Simplification Theory for Navigating the VUCA: The Case of Buurtzorg Nederland

Sharda S. Nandram

1 Introduction

Professionals in corporations, managers, entrepreneurs, and customers seem to struggle with the so called VUCA world: *Volatile*: changes occur in a high speed; *Uncertainty*: deterministic models that were appropriate for giving solutions do not work; *Complex*: the access to the global world has made it easy to connect to every part of the world, yet it has become very complex; *Ambiguous*: there are several views to give meaning to things that happen around us. There is a need for organizational innovation mainly to cope with the turbulence, but also to save costs, to enhance creativity, and meaningful workplaces. At the individual level, due to the increase in complexity and sheer speed of modern life, also entrepreneurs suffer from high competition, high levels of stress and the feeling of being cut off from that which is essential and meaningful. As a result, there is an emergence of holistic perspectives through both new approaches and ancient traditions to improve workplaces. Entrepreneurs who feel drawn to seek meaning and fulfillment through a spiritual quest, and even those who seek a more moral and reasonable existence are no longer satisfied by a purely materialistic, affective and intellectually focused life (Kauanui et al. 2010; Tencati and Zsolnai 2009). Employees feel they are living a fragmented existence driven by the challenges and desire. They

This chapter is based on: Nandram, S. S. (2015). *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification* (pp. 135–162). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

S.S. Nandram (✉)
Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India
e-mail: sharda@praan.nl

seek for a source of meaning in all areas of their lives and not just in church or on the meditation cushion (Sheep 2006; Pruzan 2009). It seems that holistic approaches to such needs could give some answers on how to cope with the VUCA as it is a holistic problem too. A holistic problem effects a whole system. Holism forms a whole which is more than the sum of its parts; a whole has qualities which are independent and different from the properties of its parts (Smuts 1927; O'Connor and McDermott 1997; Durkheim 2003). Holistic also refers to addressing an issue from several dimensions such as time, feelings, space and focusing on several purposes. Some pursue meaning in live or well-being, others enhancing religious orientations, while some wants to increase their organizational or professional productivity. The scholarly work on spirituality at the workplace, in leadership and entrepreneurship of the last 20 years has increased and captures holistic perspectives. Some of them refer to the organizational level while others at the more psychological level of human beings. At the organizational level we can find the studies on human values in management (Chakraborty 1995; Mitroff and Denton 1999), ethical management (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz 2003; Giacalone and Promislo 2013; Zsolnai 2007; Bandsuch and Cavanagh 2002), spiritual based leadership (Pandey and Singh 2010; Nandram 2010a; Fry 2003; Fry 2005a, b; Fry and Slocum 2008; Nandram and Vos 2010; Karakas 2010; Benefiel 2008; Chopra 2002), and organizational consciousness (Pandey et al. 2009; Pandey 2007). At the psychological level we find studies on transformational learning and training (Awal 2010), transformational coaching (Keizer and Nandram 2010), mindfulness (Nandram and Borden 2011) and well-being (Marques 2006; Nandram and Borden 2010; Bouckaert and Zsolnai 2011; Gupta 2010; De Wit et al. 2010; Biberman and Tischler 2008). Scholars also discuss the potential conceptual framing and understanding of the term spirituality from a multidimensional view (Benefiel 2003, 2005; Krishnakumar and Neck 2002; Karakas 2010) and its relationship to organizational output (Biberman and Whitty 1997; Karakas 2010) while others discuss ways for measuring spirituality (Miller 1983, 2004; Piedmont and Leach 2002; Ashmos and Duchon 2000; Miller and Ewest 2011). Several scholars attempt to develop an alternative economic worldview (Ims and Jakobsen 2006; Bouckaert et al. 2008; Bouckaert 2007) by integrating a spiritual worldview in economic principles.

The VUCA world requires a holistic approach and in the scholarly domain we could benefit from field studies, evidence based approaches. Johansen's (Lawrence 2013) VUCA prime provides such a holism without explicitly labelling it as such. It suggest several abilities such as a vision to deal with volatility, understanding to deal with uncertainty values such as, being simple without being simplistic to deal with complexity and the attitude of agility to deal with ambiguity (Johansen and Euchner 2013). Such abilities require immersive learning (Johansen and Euchner 2013), transformative learning (Hart 2014; Nandram 2014) and new ways of knowing while the tradition in management of Research and Development has been the rational method of rigorous analysis and proof (Johansen and Euchner 2013). More and more scholars demonstrate how rigorous research can be realized while using qualitative inductive research methods (Eisenhardt 1989; Kreiner et al. 2006). Navigating the VUCA world requires a focus on complex thinking abilities and mindsets of leaders (Petrie 2011) and professionals (Horney et al. 2010) as part

of immersive learning. Adams and Thompson (2014) suggest to work on organizational change by using an inside-out approach by exploring the internal world using the metaphor of a monk and getting aligned with the expectations in the outside world, using the metaphor of a suit. In the same way Ertel and Solomon (2014) suggest that to navigate in a VUCA world the first step is defining your purpose as a leader. Scholars suggest the need to understand our thinking process by rethinking how we think which has then implications on how we teach in other ways than linear ways which again resonate with a holistic approach (Vaughan 2013). Johansen and Euchner (2013) mention how several levels of our functioning, including mental skills of coping with confusion and fear are part of the game. According to them you have to be an athlete to thrive. Physical fitness, mental fitness and nutrition and healthy lifestyles are not optional for leaders and entrepreneurs but necessities (Johansen and Euchner 2013) and the twenty-first century leadership resembles a world-class athlete (Horney et al. 2010). All these authors urge for seeking a solution in a holistic way to navigate the VUCA.

In this chapter I will further focus on the VUCA world of a Health Care organization for living at home patients, the so called community care. The purpose is to learn from this organization to develop theoretical insights on how to cope with such a VUCA world.

2 Methodology

Learning from an evidence based best practice invites for a Grounded Theory Methodology (Glaser 2002, 2011). The stages of the research process and the several activities of the Grounded Theory Methodology are presented in Fig. 1 (Glaser 2002, 2011; Glaser and Strauss 1967). Such a case gives possibilities for inductive research assuming that the organizational world is socially constructed, that the respondents of the study are knowledgeable agents and that data which is grounded in the experiences of the respondents contribute to their sense making instead of proposing preordained understandings on their experience (Gioia et al. 2013). For this research I applied the classical Grounded Theory Methodology. The following data has been used: interviews with 40 people, 5 of them more than once to get deeper understanding of some issues or for validation of findings; 3 meetings with teams, 3 meetings with coaches; 2 day client visits, input from 3 teams, two roundtable sessions chaired by the founder with teams, coaches and researchers; interviews with the founder; 3 informal celebrations, meeting with the supervisory board, results from the Client Surveys, Employee Surveys, introduction meeting with the nurses and nurse assistants, a business seminar, policy, financial data and web blogs, and research reports on the case.

All interviews for the first stage were done face to face; follow up interviews to get more clarification of the primary process, were done by Skype interviews, by phone or face to face. Before additional data was used the concepts had already emerged and the theory was written in draft. From all these interviews field notes were written and immediately after each interview memos were documented and

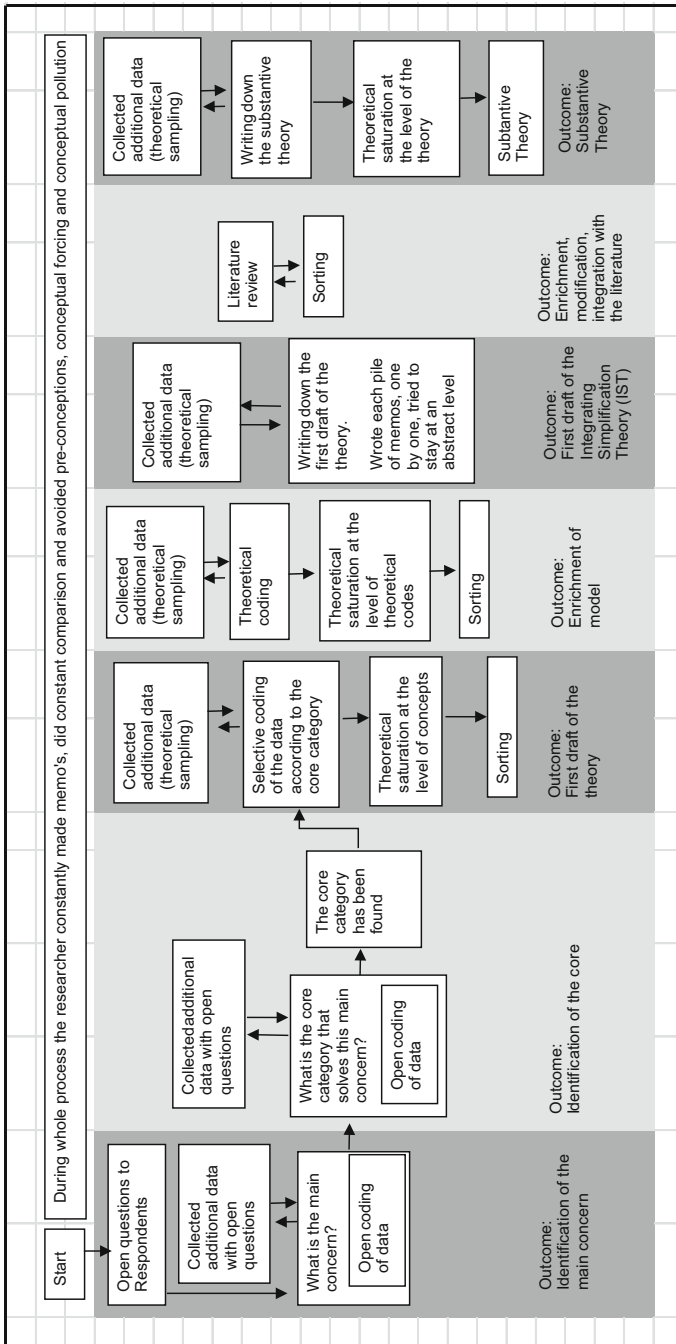


Fig. 1 Overview of the research methodology

the process of open coding was followed. Next to the open coding, handwritten mind maps were prepared to note new ideas and coding was done. Notes on observations during the interviews were written immediately after the interview. Observations were made and documented during the time spent at the organization in a separate document.

For validating the results (theoretical sampling) I presented the concepts of the theory and its explanations to the founder, creative thinker, an ICT advisor, a selection of three coaches and two nurses. Due to their role I assumed that not everyone could give additional feedback or confirmations of what I had found on all the five dimensions. The nurses therefore shared mainly their views on Craftsmanship and Attunement to the client.

The main concern in the study was: ‘What does an organization do, to deliver services that are fulfilling the client’s/customer’s needs? In more concrete terms: ‘how does it design and organize its activities for realizing a client focused service?’

The case to be studied is Buurtzorg Nederland, a non-profit community care organization in the Netherlands. It was set up in 2006 and now consists of around 14,000 nurses, working in 950 teams across the country, serving about 70,000 clients per year. Buurtzorg has been awarded several prizes for its good practice and is labeled as disruptive organizational innovation as it is led by two directors with no hierarchic organizational structure, it has about 0.5% of the employees working as staff, and a small number of 20 coaches facilitating the teams of nurses. Analyzing its start-up led to the conclusion that it has been established as a response to the VUCA problem in the health care industry of community care. Organizations could not keep up the speed of innovative developments and clients’ needs. Financial structures and accountability were made too complex. Clients were uncertain whether they could count on the care they needed. The quality of care had become fragmented and ineffective. Patients often dealt with more than 30 different nurses in a month. Regulations increased and could be interpreted ambiguously. Quality of the care dropped. The role of nurses got lost in the new structures of reforms. The reforms also incited a change in attitude and approach of the health care. The image emerged as if this industry could operate on pure economic principles and business goals in terms of maximizing profit while the customer was not the same type of customer who was operating at the free market. The customer in health care was the patient who needed the best possible care to become independent and empowered again to live a life according to the highest norms in quality. Instead, due to the reforms, the overall view of the patients’ needs were lost or ignored. The role of the community nurses changed. The autonomy they were used to decreased over the years and economic principles became more important than good care. Buurtzorg was a response to these VUCA features.

3 Results

3.1 Integrating Simplification

Integrating Simplification has emerged as a process of engaging in simplicity and refraining from complexity to avoid disintegration in the community care. Disintegration refers to all kinds of wastage due to imbalance, for example: in time and other resources that are required for a task, imbalance between personal and organizational motives, or between personal and organizational values. Integration implies harmonizing towards a whole, a unity or a common goal or higher purpose. In this case it is about aligning toward the vision of simplification. Simplifying practices then becomes the united, whole, common or higher purpose which in this case was serving the client according to their needs and capabilities. Integrating Simplification is a form of organizational innovation that enables an organization to operate according to a client focus. Serving the client according to his needs is the main driving force for this type of organizing.

3.2 Three Action Principles for Feeding the Mindset

There are three organizing principles that form the process of Integrating Simplification in the client focused approach (see Fig. 2).

The process of systematically identifying and assessing what is needed by asking the questions:

- What are the needs of the client?
- Why do we do things as we always do?
- How does it help the client?

This process is labeled as the *Needing-Principle* as it requires a reflection on the actual needs and practices. It can lead to *resetting habitual patterns*.

Continuously connecting to different types and sources of information and cues and reconstructing the perception of reality:

- What is really going on?
- Are we doing the right things?
- Is there a simpler way of doing things?

This process is labeled as the *Re-thinking Principle* as it requires a reflection on existing perceptions. It may result in *resetting the mind* to let novel ideas be born.

Designing and implementing tasks according to the current circumstances or new perceived reality until this doesn't work because the context has changed again or someone has a better alternative:

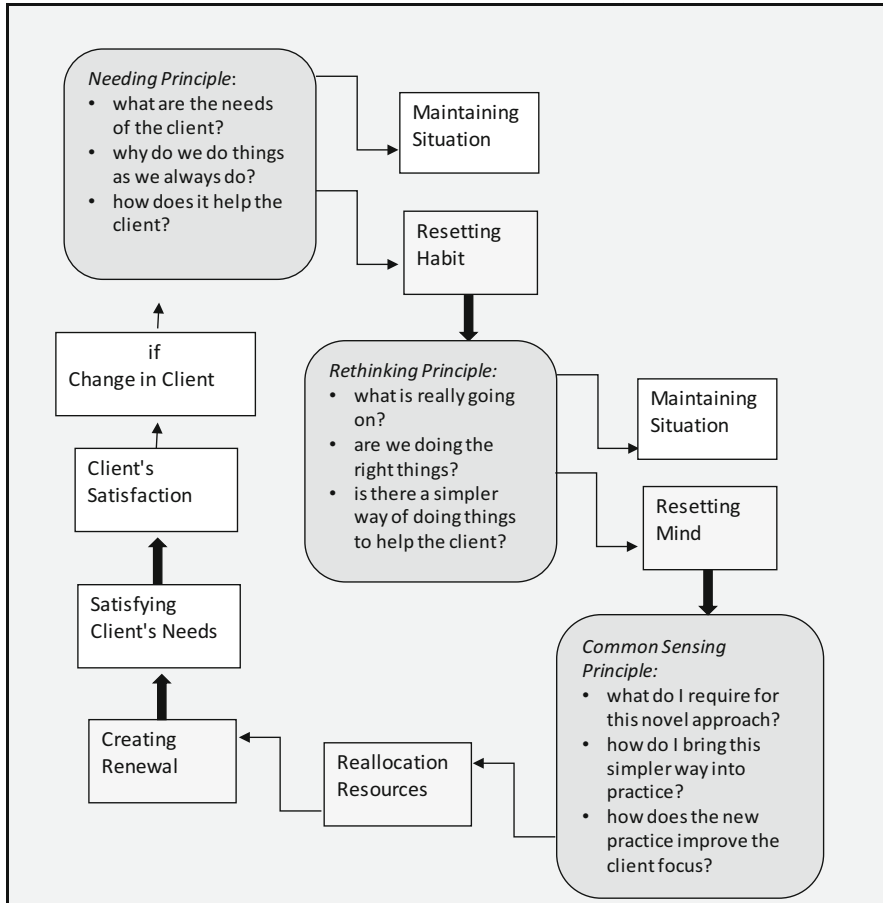


Fig. 2 Principles of Integrating Simplification. Source: Nandram (2015)

- What do I require for this novel approach?
- How do I bring this simpler way into practice?
- How does the new practice improve the client focus?

This process is labeled as the *Common-Sensing Principle* as it requires a reflection on resources and acting in a pragmatic way. It may result in *reallocating resources* (mobilizing several types of resources) and *creating renewal* (for example: empowering client to find solutions for problems).

Each of these three main steps could lead to the conclusion of simply to: continue with the way of working, thus keeping the status-quo or exploring further improvements with the additional steps until the clients’ needs are met. Clients then feel highly gratified which leads to a feeling of fulfillment among the employees.

The process starts again and the professionals ask the same questions, each time the client's situation changes. Nurses and nurse assistants actually tell how each client is different and how client's behavior can differ over the course of time. Based on the data, it occurred as if change is the only constant in the context of the healthcare. Clients come and go, and their capabilities can change during the course as well.

These principles form the basis of a holistic mindset to deliver the care that is needed while staying aligned to the goals of the organization, the external context and the internal professional attitude to deliver satisfying work.

3.3 Business Achievements

In 2006, Buurtzorg was started with a big ambition, to transform fragmented Dutch homecare into integrative community care. Its model has been awarded several prizes and has become a best practice example for other existing home care organizations in the Netherlands and abroad, including the United States, Sweden, China and Japan. Currently about 25 countries have shown interest and are exploring collaboration and experimentation with the approach in the community care. The organization relied on a flat structure to have an integrative focus on meaningful relationships for mindfulness aspects of work and on ICT to handle the mindlessness aspect.

The professionals of Buurtzorg work fewer hours at the client (108 per year and 19.6 per month) than the professionals of other providers (per year 168 and per month 23.2). The total duration of the care is shorter. The growth is about 100 new locations in the period of 2012–2013. After acquisition of a part of a home care organization, now there are 14,000 nurses in 950 'independent' teams; 45 staff at the back office and 20 coaches focusing on serving 70,000 patients a year. Based on the Consumer (Client) Quality Index of 2012, it can be concluded that clients' satisfaction is high with a score of 9.1. In 2013 this Index was even higher, 9.5. The employee satisfaction score of 8.9 in 2013 is high as well, based on the study of Effectory, an independent market research institute. *Buurtzorg was named the Best Employer of the Year in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015* and in 2013 Buurtzorg was the runner up after KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.

By the end of 2015 the turnover was 275 million Euros. About one third of employees are community nurses, one third are nurses, and one third are nurse assistants.

Every year the overhead costs are kept low: Overhead costs: 8% (average 25%), the profit rate is about 4% and sickness rate about 4% (average 6%) (Fig. 3).

Several organizations have even started to recognize the model as a best practice of organizational innovation in general. What makes Buurtzorg interesting? Its development from scratch during a period where many organizations had difficulties in realizing financially sound outcomes. The huge growth it has realized,

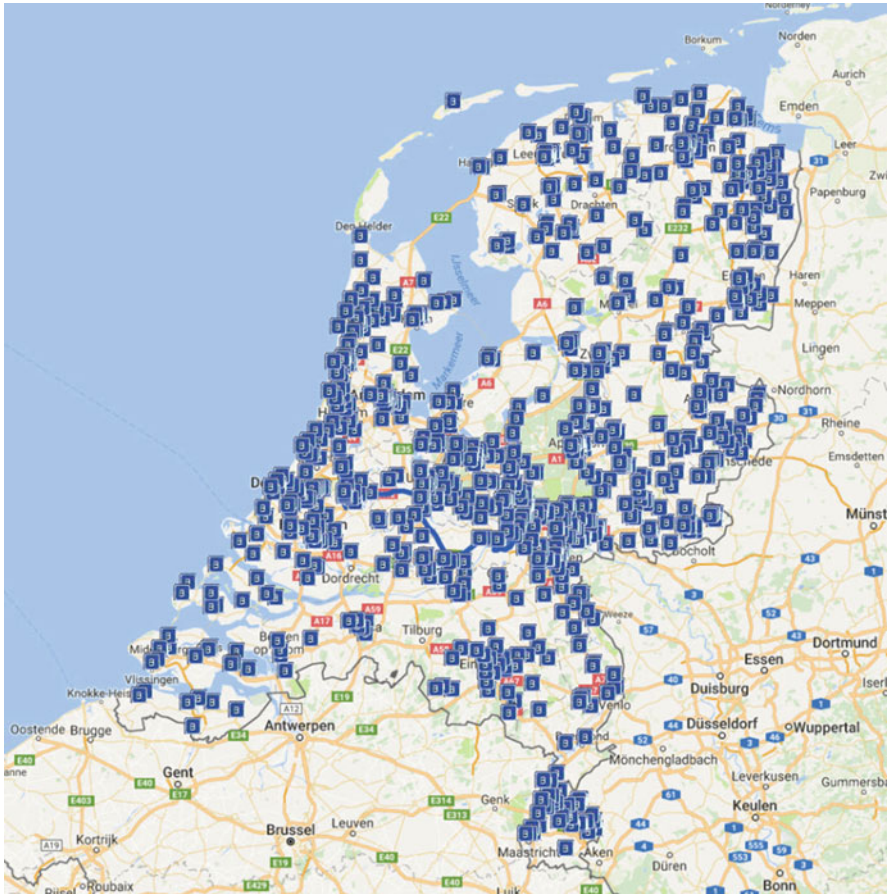


Fig. 3 Geographic reach of Buurtzorg Teams

and the satisfied employees and clients keepcatching the attention of many who learn from its vision and operational approach. Several organizations are experimenting with self-managed team structures and decentralization of decision making at the level of frontline nurses and nurse assistants, but implementing the vision of Buurtzorg requires a more holistic approach.

3.4 Five Organizing Core Concepts for Building the Architecture

Five core concepts emerged: Integrated Attunement to the client, Subtle Craftsmanship, Pragmatic Will with ICT, Intrapreneurial Team Freedom and Leading a Higher Purpose.

Client's Integrated Attunement

The first concept, tells us what needs to be done to get an overview of the client from a holistic perspective and what actions are required to implement for attuning to holistic needs of the client. In this process it is important to know how to stay attuned to the client's needs and capabilities and how to keep his or her independency as long as possible. It is also necessary to know, what style of communication with the client and his or her significant others is required to serve their needs, what interactions are essential to mobilize and foster sustainable networks for ensuring good care, empowering independency and gaining insights in the available additional resources and capabilities. Given the client's current medical and social, demographic and geographic conditions we ask the following questions: What are possible predictions for the intensity of care and support for the near future? What are the things to be taken care of now to maintain the current level of quality and to prevent a decrease in quality in life? What are communication strategies to stay attuned to the future condition and needs of the client?

While a holistic view asks for insights at different levels thus making the picture more complex for the nurse or nurse assistant as she has to gather and cope with more information, for the client it is a simplification. They entrust their 'problems' to the professionals. Among many clients this creates a feeling of being relaxed. Subsequently this may contribute to a feeling of a higher quality of life. It may also contribute to a faster recovery or an easy coping with their deprived situation.

Subtle Craftsmanship

Integrated attunement can be realized through Craftsmanship. The term subtle is included to label the holistic abilities that are involved in addition to the professional work of a nurse such as listening to subtle cues in the environment of the client's such as a smell of infection or internal insights such as expert intuition. Community nurses are trained with expertise to get a holistic view of the needs and capabilities of the client. They are trained to visit clients in their private environment and therefore know how to relate to privacy issues, how to develop a personal approach while still keeping a professional distance. They are trained to offer different kinds of solutions: medical related, psychological and socially structured. They are also trained in communication skills to discuss various types of issues with clients. They attain, practice and master skills of different kinds. This means that they possess a deep understanding and maturity. They gain a holistic view and develop holistic approaches to solutions. They build a network, and know relevant stakeholders in the neighborhoods of their clients. They develop additional insights of the whole chain of care while dealing with these networks and stakeholders. Therefore they are able to tap from these resources when solving various queries,

also in the future. Due to their expertise they can anticipate on the future needs of the client as well. This chain perspective resembles Craftsmanship. Through their Craftsmanship they help the client in the best possible way, they foster sustainable networks, use available but often untapped resources and they help the client in a personal and professional manner.

The number of a team is maximum 12 nurses and nurse assistants. Usually a client receives help from 3 to 4 team members in order to build trust with the client, maintain their privacy as much as possible and enhance a deep understanding of the client's needs. Significant others including family, friends and neighbors can be approached for additional support in whatever beneficial way when needed. Becoming familiar with a small team, clients are able to build warm relationships with the nurses and nurse assistants and are more comfortable to address different kinds of needs or issues they face. They only need to share with a few nurses and nurse assistants rather than explaining about their needs to many.

A main benefit of the self-managed teams is a faster decision making process as the decision power for daily activities is at the team level. Teams apply peer supervising and mentoring, or approach their coach, post their query on the website or they enquire with the Headquarters for support and answers.

Craftsmanship facilitates an attunement to the client in an integrated way. It simplifies the process of exploring networks, building trust, effective communication and the development of insight of the whole picture. It contributes to employee satisfaction and commitment, as well as the organization's outcomes such as productivity and growth in number of clients, through the networks that are built. It contributes to client satisfaction and sincere loyalty. This produces word of mouth marketing leading to new clients. Therefore marketing costs for attracting new clients are extremely low.

Pragmatic Will with ICT

While Craftsmanship comprises the primary process of nursing and caring, an attitude of Pragmatic Will enables the Craftsmanship process and the process of integrated attunement of the client. Pragmatic Will refers to the discipline of designing arrangements in the organizational architecture or designing the physical features of the organization to stay focused on serving the client in the best possible way. It is about simplification in the architecture and integrating this simplification through Craftsmanship and integrated attunement of the client, which contributes to a client focus. Pragmatic Will is about organizing and functioning in a specific way to ensure integrated concrete results at several levels: from a client perspective, Craftsmanship perspective and a business point of view. Several activities comprise the Pragmatic Will. Each of these is related to one or more of the other core concepts of Integrating Simplification.

There are ICT facilities at several levels: an internal virtual community to communicate and share experiences; facilities to make productivity transparent on the virtual platform; facilities for quality control, reducing various printed forms by digitalizing them; digitalizing processes to reduce workload and increase

flexibility. They are all aiming to reduce the complexity and therefore create more time for serving the client in the best possible way.

There is a limited administrative reporting. The numbers of forms to be filled in at the client's visits are kept as low as possible. There is an attitude of doing only what is necessary. Forms that are commonly used in the industry for quality control have been simplified to avoid spending too much time for producing administrative reports. Also the number of forms and ways of reporting to the Headquarters are significantly lower compared to the industry standard.

Overall we can state that Pragmatic Will leads to outcomes that directly enable Craftsmanship to serve the client's needs in the best possible way. Furthermore it results in low overhead costs and low complexity. It also offers a path, guideline or framework that is found systematically throughout the organization. It serves as a culture to which everyone in the organization abides. Because of its simplicity it is known to everyone in the organization and easily assessed and applied. At times of conflicts, confusion or uncertainty this systematic path is often being assessed mindfully leading to solutions. Having such a systematic path helps to get a detached view, apart from emotionally infused points of views, especially when conflicts occur in teams.

Intrapreneurial Team Freedom

Furthermore the process of Craftsmanship is being facilitated by an attitude of nourishing an Intrapreneurial Freedom in the team. At the team level, individuals experience freedom to express their ideas for improving the client focus approach, the freedom to explore with different tasks such as planning, coordination, recruitment interviews, chairing meetings for enhancing entrepreneurial skills in addition to their professional Craftsmanship skills. Teams take responsibility and act like intrapreneurs. Teams formulate themselves, either as a new team because they have noticed a need in a particular geographical area or as a second team. The maximum number per team is 12. Teams that have grown beyond this number need to split and create a second team. There are areas with a single team but there are also areas with more than two teams. They receive some guidelines, are aware of the mission of the organization, make sure they possess the skills to serve the client and to run a team with mates. Team members are also responsible for exploring possibilities; to get new clients in the future, to search new innovative approaches, develop new expertise and knowledge to serve the clients in the best possible way.

In employee surveys the entrepreneurial space is valued highly by many of the nurses. During face to face interviews with nurses the opportunity to manage the own work, the freedom to experiment with new approaches and serving the client as a whole person are often mentioned as main motivators. They value the small teams, the autonomy to organize their work, the possibility to discover, explore and develop new skills when setting up the team and running the activities themselves. This improves their self-esteem. Some of them stated that in previous workplaces they would never discover their hidden talents. The ICT facilities enable their entrepreneurial attitude of taking initiative, being autonomous, frugal, innovating and pro-actively exploring the future. They also experience the flat organizational

structure as a very positive framework because it creates the possibility to reach out to the Headquarters quickly for any type of query. Due to all these entrepreneurial features their Craftsmanship as nurses and nurse assistants has been revitalized, the workload that does not serve the primary process has been simplified and reduced and therefore they have more time to practice their entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore they feel due to the entrepreneurial space that they are able to serve the client in the best possible way which gives meaningful lives to the clients and meaningful workplaces to themselves.

Leading Higher Purpose

In the interviews, employees expressed a feeling of ownership of Buurtzorg Nederland. Some feel they have contributed in building the organization and express a feeling of pride. Many employees expressed that serving the client in the best possible way is what gives them fulfillment, something that they have not felt for years but what was their occupational calling when they choose the nursing profession. The way Buurtzorg is organized gives them this possibility. Many employees also shared the opinion that the mission and strategies at Buurtzorg fully resonate with their own mission and strategies. They often address to it as an ideal or noble cause to strive for. Some refer to the founder as a person with high ideals aiming to change and transform the industry. The higher purpose also resonates with clients and other stakeholders who are not direct competitors. This higher purpose thus resonates at several levels within and outside the organization and results in a sense of belongingness and commitment to the activities of Buurtzorg which can be seen as a way of simplifying the value proposition of the organization.

It seems that terms such as management and leadership do not resonate in the organization. Employees expressed that they do not consider the founder or the coaches as managers. They know their own responsibilities. While the founders and coaches may give suggestions and tools for making the decision, what to do with them is theirs. At Buurtzorg the terms management and leadership do not have a place. Some employees expressed their need to be led or coordinated especially when they started to work for Buurtzorg. However, after a while they became familiar to the concept that one needs to lead oneself and manages his work by knowing his responsibilities and seeking the connection and collaboration with other colleagues but mainly with the vision of the organization, which is helping the client in the best possible way. A connection to such a higher purpose results in the expression of detachment from being managed, led, coordinated or controlled.

While employees acknowledge that the founder is an important driving force the good thing here is that they do not feel they are dependent on him for getting the work done, nor does he think employees should be dependent on him. Such a detachment expression ensures a sustainable existence of the organization. A side effect is that whenever the founder is conveying a message or opinion through the virtual platform or at a meeting, the messages and opinions are taken very seriously and become even internalized in the belief systems of the employees. They become

a shared value. One could state that because of the implicit leadership, when this becomes explicit or visible, its strength can be dominant.

Leading a Higher Purpose acts as fuels in the coordination of the several components in the organization. It influences serving the client indirectly through other components such as; integrated and attuned client focus, Craftsmanship, Pragmatic Will and Intrapreneurial Team Freedom. It fosters simplicity throughout the organization. We could state that *Integrating Simplification occurs through a Pragmatic Will, Intrapreneurial Team Freedom, Subtle Craftsmanship and Attunement to the Client [a mindful assessment and adjustment to the needs and capabilities of the client (as a whole person)], as well as the dedication of the leader to a Higher Purpose and his willingness to serve this purpose rather than to lead an organization.*

4 The 17 Properties

As per our research we found following dimensions of outcomes as they relate to the VUCA properties of the context:

Volatility is being addressed through—context attunement, entrepreneurial behavior, a flexible ICT support, founder's diverse roles

Uncertainty is being solved by: emotional attunement to the client, temporal attunement to get the client empowered as soon as possible to get him back to normal situation, application of subtle expertise to help the client, and smart communication.

Rhythm attunement: self-managed, teams, setting intrapreneurial conditions for freedom, a step by step introduction of creative ICT solutions, all are related to solving the issue of complexity that surrounds an organization.

The issue of ambiguity is being solved through the properties of professional attunement, team synergy, maintaining intrapreneurial freedom, systematic assessment, putting humanity over bureaucracy as the basic human belief (Table 1).

Further IST helps to manage the limitations posed by self-managing structures like that of Buurtzorg. Some of these limitation are (not limited to)—struggle between spirit of commander's intent and elimination of autonomy due to his word and dependency on founder for nourishment of organization worldview. Some struggle for balancing mindlessness and mindfulness. Others are striking a balance in their motivation and finding a balance between their local and global aspirations (Career Block and being led by extrinsic or intrinsic rewards). IST can lead to managing the degree of openness of organization ecosystem to the outside world (Closed Eco systems) or to maintain the Zeitgeber Focus so that the organization and related individuals are harmoniously attuned to each other.

...Degree of synchronicity between individual's & group's worldview, makes a culture strong or weak...

Table 1 IST concepts

IST dimensions for assessment, implementation and planning	Properties	Sub-level concepts	Navigating VUCA
Attunement to the client	Rhythm attunement		Complexity
	Professional attunement	Trusting professionalism, holistic perception	Ambiguity
	Emotional attunement	– Acknowledging humane values – Parenting responsibility	Uncertainty
	Context attunement	– Engaging social ties – Community coherence – Awareness conflicting interest	Volatility
Subtle craftsmanship	Temporal attunement	– Empathy-based care – Empowering independency	Uncertainty
	Self-managed teams	– Support for secondary tasks – Small teams – Close to the client	Complexity
	Team synergy	– Balanced team composition – Mindful communication	Ambiguity
	Subtle expertise	– In-depth expertise – Removing the veil – Fingerspitzengefühl	Uncertainty
Intrapreneurial team freedom	Entrepreneurial behavior	– Facing stigmatization – Affordable loss principle – Activist’s attitude	Volatility
	Conditions for freedom	– Organizational freedom – Freedom for meaningfulness – Agreements on safeguards	Complexity
	Maintaining freedom	– Protecting autonomy – Maintenance eco-system – Building coherence	Ambiguity

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

IST dimensions for assessment, implementation and planning	Properties	Sub-level concepts	Navigating VUCA
Pragmatic will with ICT	Flexible ICT-support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on care process – Helicopter view back office – Data entry for self-managed teams 	Volatility
	Systematic assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Content assessment with Omaha systems – Quality of care – Continuous learning 	Ambiguity
	Step by step approach to creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Effectual practice – Smart simplification – Frugal attitude 	Complexity
Leading higher purpose	Humanity of bureaucracy as main belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trust in good will – Remove the veil of capacity – Build ethics of care 	Ambiguity
	Various roles of founder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Manager – Change agent – Nurse – Integrator 	Volatility
	Smart communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mindful receiver – Open communication – Sensible information 	Uncertainty

Adapted from: Organizational innovation by integrating simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland. p. 168–169 (Sharda S. Nandram), Springer. Publisher

5 Meta Competence of Yogic Leadership

Next to the action related principles and the organizational architecture there is a meta-competence or holistic competence of leadership at Buurtzorg in their attempt to deliver a client centered approach. It resembles the Yogic Concepts of “*Abhyasa*” (effort, will, practice, discipline, control to win) and “*Vairagya*” (acceptance and insights of what distracts and let go to renew), both necessary wings to join or integrate and simplify. The art of “*Abhyasa*” leads to sincere devotion toward realizing the goal. This is an attitude that we have seen among the leader, nurses and nurse assistants. The art of “*Vairagya*” leads to in-depth understanding of different paths and experiences to serve the goal. This is an attitude that we have noticed as well in the organization.

What the Yogic leader does is: balancing between these two actions, as an attitude in general sense in running the organization and in more specific sense,

he is integrating several dimensions so that all function in harmony. From a meta-view, the integrative processes where balancing is required occur at four aspects. Each requires a certain dominant ability where the principles of Integrating Simplification are part of.

Balancing between the primary and secondary process where the main tasks occur in the primary process. In the primary process he has the attitude of Vairagya and in the secondary process he applies the attitude of Abhyasa. Here he can use control mechanisms if required and foster a discipline and put effort to win. *The art of creating effectiveness is important.* The VUCA aspect that is being coped with here is Complexity.

Second is balancing between the higher purpose and the leadership visibility, both at the level of the leadership of the coaches and at the level of the directors. Choosing for client focus is the starting point of the whole organizational process. The more the client focus is being perceived as a higher purpose the more easily the employees and other stakeholders are committed and feel a belongingness to put effort in realizing this higher purpose. The coaches do not act as watch dogs but as facilitators, giving the support when needed. They can be made visible when the team needs them. They can make themselves visible when they think the higher purpose is at stake. The same holds for the directors. They can be made visible when the employees need them. They can make themselves visible when they perceive a distraction from the client's focus or when they believe the organization's higher purpose is at stake. *Here the art of attuning serves as a key component representing a higher mental dimension.* In this aspect of the meta competence it is about coping with VUCA-Ambiguity.

Pragmatic Will and Intrapreneurial Team Freedom at the mental and physical level: there is another dimension of Integrating Simplification. Pragmatic Will serves as a discipline of putting a continuous effort to realize the aims without being distracted, discouraged or bored. It allows a systematic assessment of its features at several levels in the organization. It serves like a thread that resonates as a common approach to be followed in the organization at whatever position or task a person operates. Entrepreneurial attitude as the twin partner, acts as another discipline to dissociate from routines, to dispassion from habitual thinking and acting. It generates an openness to renew. We could imagine both as two wings that are necessary to act for making Craftsmanship a success. Whether to choose either for Pragmatic Will or Intrapreneurial Freedom is a matter of discernment based on professional maturity. Patterns of Pragmatic Will are always present in the teams, among the coaches, and in the Headquarters of the organization. Based on experiences, spaces are created for the unexpected. *Discovering of opportunity becomes the key art in this dimension of Integrating Simplification and represents the physical dimension of the organizational architecture and a mental dimension as the knowledge force.* Here it is about coping with VUCA-Volatility.

Craftsmanship and Attunement as a vital process: craftsmanship ensured mastering the skills that are required to get the holistic view of the client and attune to him with the expertise to help the client in the best possible way. Here it requires to combining craftsmanship and clients' capabilities to maintain or enhance their

Table 2 Features of the meta competence—yogic leadership

Activity: Abhyasa-Vairagya	Core concepts (dimensions) in the IST	Integrating abilities	VUCA at meta level
Balancing primary and secondary process	Overall organizational architecture	Art of <i>creating effectiveness</i> – Needing – Re-thinking – Common-sensing	Complexity
Balancing higher purpose and visibility leader	Higher purpose	Art of <i>entraining to common goal</i> – Needing – Re-thinking – Common-sensing	Ambiguity
Balancing between systematic and dynamic process	Pragmatic ICT solution and entrepreneurship	Art of <i>opportunity discovery</i> – Needing – Re-thinking – Common-sensing	Volatility
Balancing between professional and empathic relationship	Craftsmanship and attunement to the client	Art of <i>building trust</i> – Needing – Re-thinking – Common-sensing	Uncertainty

quality of life and independency. *Trust building is the key art of Integrating Simplification at the level of nurse/nurse assistant and client relationship, representing a vital dimension of the knowledge force.* Here it is about coping with VUCA-Uncertainty (Table 2).

6 The Spiritual Dimension

This chapter has several practical and scientific implications. It has become obvious that IST provides a solution for navigating the VUCA world from different perspectives. IST does not only have implications for the community care but it gives a theoretical framework and a dynamic model with variables to be implemented and translated to sectors where the VUCA problem is present.

The rationale for the spiritual movement in management (Ashmos and Duchon 2000) has been the need of a paradigm shift in the last two decades. This shift is complex, has multiple dimensions such as moving from a predictable outlook to chaos, from command and control or fear-based approaches to trust and empowerment, from complexity to simplicity, from transactional to transformational (Karakas 2009). These reasons resemble the VUCA problem.

While there is a growing interest in spirituality in management if we look at the material that is being published, including best sellers (Karakas 2010), it still leads to divergent thoughts. Sometimes it closes doors as it invites for new or the less dominant research traditions of inductive research. For scholars publishing such research it is always less easy to convey their findings at scientific platforms than research based on positivistic dominant approaches. Even while there are several expressions of spirituality such as the humane values, corporate social responsibility, spiritual techniques, and religious practices, managers of organizations are not easily convinced the spirituality makes sense as its dominant resemblance is religion which does not fit the secularism in modern management context. While individual religious practices could be beneficial to employees, managers, entrepreneurs and customers as psychological healing instrument, it does not represent the whole domain of spirituality in management. Therefore we need to unravel the fuzziness, ambiguity and complexity of the umbrella concept of spirituality by defining concepts that connects better (Kelemen and Peltonen 2005; Milliman et al. 2003; Pandey and Gupta 2008). The VUCA concept could be such an alternative. Several spiritual expressions can be hosted as an attitude to cope with VUCA. It invites organizations to work on uplifting organizations and contributing to building a new management paradigm for facing volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. By offering theoretical frameworks such at the Integrating Simplification Theory, humane organizational structures could be implemented widely instead of remaining at discussions on philosophical and spiritual traditions and debates on its relevance for management.

This chapter has contributed by showing how the field of management and spirituality can be developed further through building theory from an evidence based case as this will take away the prejudice the field is suffering from of being pseudo-scientific by the majority of scholars. The approach in this study contributes to the call for organization research to develop new concepts that are relevant to human organizational experiences and that are adequate at the level of scientific theorizing about those experiences (Gioia et al. 2013; Alvesson and Sandberg 2011; Gioia 1986). It shows that an inductive research with rigor analysis has ended up with findings to be broadly applied to management in a holistic way by building policy and instruments at three major levels in organizations: actions at the mindset level; the organizational architecture and leadership. While each of these has its novelty and contributions, it is the whole of these three that works as a sustainable business practice under the label of Integrating Simplification.

Research on the effect of a more humane approach of organizations, for example by spiritual climate and spiritual leadership, on the external stakeholders such as the customer, is scarce. Some studies have examined a positive relationship between special features of organizational culture, climate or architecture and the satisfaction of customers (Usman and Danish 2010; Pandey et al. 2009). The field study of this chapter has demonstrated how the innovative organizational practice at Buurtzorg, has its impact on its clients as well. More studies are required to focus on how other types of stakeholders in the external community feel the impact of such organizational innovation. Future studies could be done to validate the IST in

other sectors than the community care as it embraces universal aspects that could be seen as a response to the turbulence in different domains of economic life. Yet another theme for research could be the examination of its holistic outcomes capturing several aspects of value creation than merely financial.

7 Inspired by Buurtzorg and New Models Across the Globe

Zorgaccent and Amstelring (Netherlands), have implemented the model from a holistic perspective in close collaboration with the founder of Buurtzorg and the IT expert who has been considered the creative thinker for Buurtzorg. Zorgaccent provides community care and elderly care to 3300 clients in a local region, close to the Headquarters of Buurtzorg. Researchers have concluded that there is +20% more care with only +1.3% more FTE. Based on a benchmark with 11 other organizations, they estimated an overall cost reduction between 7 and 14%, based on the estimated budget per client. If other similar organizations would follow the Zorgaccent policy they estimated a cost reduction of up to 25% in the public budget. About mid-2012, Amstelring initiated a pilot inspired by the Buurtzorg concept with the mission to provide community care with self-managed teams. They operationalized this by focusing on leadership style, self-management, IT and shared services funded on three core values: attentiveness, trustworthiness and togetherness. After a time span of half a year (June–November 2012) the productivity of the pilot teams at Amstelring improved from 64 to 71%. The productivity for the whole organization was 54% in 2012. The pilot teams already showed a high productivity at the start compared to the score in the whole organization. After half a year they increased their productivity. The goal set for the pilot teams is 70% based on other results from the Buurtzorg model.

Across industries and across the globe there are several models inspired by the concept of Agile which position the customer at the center. Some examples are: Netflix, Zappos, Spotify, and Google. The focus is on working in teams and self-management as approaches to serve the customer and to foster high motivation amongst employees. Within the ING bank as of summer 2015 experiments have started inspired by Agile under the label of ‘new ways of working’. Another example is Airbnb a company founded in 2008 and who rapidly turned into a home-sharing empire and the largest lodging provider, surpassing any other hotel chain in the world. Their focus has been disrupting bureaucracy.

8 Conclusion

The IST assists in navigating the VUCA world in several ways as has been presented in the properties and the meta-competence.

Volatility is being executed with the following properties of the concepts: context attunement, entrepreneurial behavior, a flexible ICT support, and various roles of the founder. Uncertainty is being solved by: emotional attunement to the

client, temporal attunement to get the client empowered as soon as possible to get him back to normal situation, application of subtle expertise to help the client, and smart communication. Rhythm attunement: self-managed, teams, setting intrapreneurial conditions for freedom, a step by step introduction of creative ICT solutions, all are related to solving the issue of complexity that surrounds an organization. The issue of ambiguity is being solved through the properties of professional attunement, team synergy, maintaining intrapreneurial freedom, systematic assessment, putting humanity over bureaucracy as the basic human belief.

No context however is the same. While structures can be build and copied, principles of Integrating Simplification can only be experienced and lived.

Therefore, after an introduction to the Buurtzorg approach a deeper understanding is required for making the Buurtzorg approach alive in the own context, within the own range of capabilities and culture of the partner and the context he operates in. Subsequently such understanding will create the learning and knowledge sharing process for the partner organization and the possibilities to absorb the Buurtzorg approach. Other organizations will apply their creativity and innovative potential to adjust features of the Buurtzorg approach within their given context. Those who want to understand and apply Integrating Simplification needs to become aware of a more humane philosophical belief system while keeping healthy economic conditions in place. We may say that the approach serves a double bottom line: humanity and economic viability or spirit and matter.

. . .Managers have destinations to reach, Leaders have journeys to experience. . .

Reflective Questions

1. What could be the qualities of a yogic leader?
2. What are the key characteristics of Integrating Simplification?
3. What are the challenges when you would apply Integrating Simplification in your own organization?
4. In what instances is bureaucracy helpful in your own organization and in what instances is it disturbing?
5. How could craftsmanship help you in your profession?
6. What ability does it require to attune to your customers?
7. How could intrapreneurial team freedom be helpful to your organization?
8. Are there ways to enhance the IT at your workplace based on the lessons of Buurtzorg?

References

- Adams, R., & Thompson, M. J. (2014). *Suited Monk leadership*. London: WOW Books.
- Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2011). Generating research questions through problematization. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 247–271.

- Ashmos, D. P., & Duchon, D. (2000b). Spirituality at work: A conceptualization and measure. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 134–145.
- Awal, D. (2010). Transformational learning: An ancient concept in modern times, chapter 14. In S. S. Nandram & M. E. Borden (Eds.), *Spirituality and business: Exploring possibilities for a new paradigm*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Bandsuch, M. R., & Cavanagh, G. F. (2002). Virtue as a benchmark for spirituality in business. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 38, 109–117.
- Benefiel, M. (2003). Irreconcilable foes? The discourse of spirituality and the discourse of organizational science. *Organization*, 10(2), 383–391.
- Benefiel, M. (2005). The second half of the journey: Spiritual leadership for organizational transformation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 723–741.
- Benefiel, M. (2008). *The soul of a leader: Finding your path to success and fulfillment*. New York: Crossroad.
- Biberman, J. and Tischler, L. (Eds.). (2008). *Spirituality in business: Theory, practice, and future directions*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Biberman, J., & Whitty, M. (1997). A postmodern spiritual future of Wok. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 10(2), 130–138.
- Bouckaert, L. (2007). Spirituality in economics. In L. Bouckaert & L. Zsolnai (Eds.), *Spirituality as a public good*. European Spes Cahier.
- Bouckaert, L., Opdebeeck, H., & Zsolnai, L. (Eds.). (2008). *Frugality: Rebalancing material and spiritual values in economic life* (Vol. 4). Oxford: Peter Lang.
- Bouckaert, L., & Zsolnai, L. (2011). *The Palgrave handbook of spirituality and business*. New York: Springer.
- Chakraborty, S. K. (1995). *Ethics in management: Vedantic perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chopra, D. (2002). The soul of leadership. *School Administrator*, 59(8).
- De Wit, M., van Straten, H., & Apte, M. (2010). Case study: AWARE at shell. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 109–116). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- Durkheim, E. (2003). *Sociologist of modernity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 532–550.
- Ertel, C., & Solomon, L. K. (2014). *Moments of impact: How to design strategic conversations that accelerate change*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 693–727.
- Fry, L. W. (2005a). Introduction to the leadership quarterly special issue: Toward a paradigm of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 619–622.
- Fry, L. W. (2005b). Toward a paradigm of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(5), 619–722.
- Fry, L. W., & Slocum Jr., J. W. (2008). Maximizing the triple bottom line through spiritual leadership. *Organizational Dynamics*, 37(1), 86–96.
- Giacalone, R. A., & Jurkiewicz, C. L. (2003). Toward a science of workplace spirituality. In *Handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance* (pp. 3–28). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Giacalone, R. A., & Promislo, M. D. (2013). Broken when entering: The stigmatization of goodness and business ethics education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 12(1), 86–101.
- Gioia, D. A. (1986). Symbols, scripts, and sense-making: Creating meaning in the organizational experience. In H. P. Sims & D. A. Gioia (Eds.), *The thinking organization* (pp. 49–74). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research notes on the gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods, 16*(1), 15–31.
- Glaser, B. (2002). Constructivist grounded theory. Forum qualitative sozialforschung. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research [Online Journal], 3*(3).
- Glaser, B. G. (2011). *Getting out of the data*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. London: Weidenfield & Nicolson.
- Gupta, S. (2010). Inspiring individuals: Transforming organizations. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 117–128). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- Hart, T. (2014). *The integrative mind: Transformative education for a world on fire*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Horney, N., Pasmore, B., & O’Shea, T. (2010). Leadership agility: A business imperative for a VUCA world. *Human Resource Planning, 33*(4), 34.
- Ims, K. J., & Jakobsen, O. D. (2006). Cooperation and competition in the context of organic and mechanistic worldviews—A theoretical and case based discussion. *Journal of Business Ethics, 66* (1), 19–32.
- Johansen, B., & Euchner, J. (2013). Conversations: Navigating the VUCA world: An interview with Bob Johansen. *Research-Technology Management, 56*(1), 10–15.
- Karakas, F. (2010). Spirituality and performance in organizations: A literature review. *Journal of Business Ethics, 94*, 89–106.
- 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.
- Keizer, W. A., & Nandram, S. S. (2010). Integral transformational coaching. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 129–140). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- Kelemen, M., & Peltonen, T. (2005). Spirituality: A way to an alternative subjectivity. *Organization Management Journal, 2*(1), 52–63.
- Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C., & Sheep, M. L. (2006). Where is the “me” among the “we”? Identity work and the search for optimal balance. *Academy of Management Journal, 49*(5), 1031–1057.
- Krishnakumar, S., & Neck, C. P. (2002). The ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ of spirituality in the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 17*(3), 153–164.
- Lawrence, K. (2013). *Developing leaders in a VUCA environment*. UNC.
- Marques, J. F. (2006). The spiritual worker. An examination of the ripple effect that enhances quality of life in- and outside the work environment. *Journal of Management Development, 25* (9), 884–895.
- Miller, D. (1983). The correlates of entrepreneurship in three types of firms. *Management Science, 29*, 770–791.
- Miller, E. D. (2004). The development and validation of a new measure of spirituality. *North American Journal of Psychology, 6*(3), 423–430.
- Miller, D. W., & Ewest, T. (2011). *Present state of workplace spirituality: Literature review of context, theory and scales and measurements*. In Submission 15995 for Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Texas.
- Milliman, J., Czaplewski, A., & Ferguson, J. (2003). Workplace spirituality and employee work attitudes: An exploratory empirical assessment. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 16*(2003), 426–447.
- Mitroff, I., & Denton, E. (1999). A study of spirituality in the workplace. *Sloan Management Review, 40*(4), 83.
- Nandram, S. S. (2010). In S. S. Nandram & M. E. Borden (Eds.), *Synchronizing leadership style with integral transformational yoga principles*. Heidelberg: Springer.

- Nandram, S. S., & Borden, M. E. (2010). Introduction: Exploring possibilities for a new paradigm. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 1–13). Berlin: Springer.
- Nandram, S. S. (2014). Vedic learning and management education. *Journal of Management Development*, 33(8/9), 860–870.
- Nandram, S. S. (2015). Theory of integrating simplification. In *Organizational innovation by integrating simplification* (pp. 23–43). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Nandram, S. S., Borden, M. E. (2011). Leading with wisdom: The development of an integral leadership model. *SPES Cahier Belgium*.
- Nandram, S. S., & Vos, J. (2010). The spiritual features of servant-leadership. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 233–244). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- O'Connor, J., & McDermott, I. (1997). *The art of systems thinking: Essential skills for creativity and problem solving*. London: Thorsons, Harper Collins Publisher.
- Pandey, A. (2007). Leading wholesome change in integral way. *NHRD Journal*, 1–6.
- Pandey, A., & Gupta, R. K. (2008). A perspective of collective consciousness of business organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80, 889–898.
- Pandey, A., & Singh, K. (2010). Wholesome leadership development process: Case study of a business organization. In *Spirituality and business* (pp. 205–217). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- Pandey, A., Gupta, R. K., & Arora, A. P. (2009). Spiritual climate of business organizations and its impact on customers' experience. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 88(2), 313–332.
- Petrie, N. (2011). *Future trends in leadership development*. Center for Creative Leadership white chapter. Retrieved December 24, 2014, from <http://www.ccl.org/Leadership/pdf/research/futureTrends.pdf>
- Piedmont, R. L., & Leach, M. M. (2002). Cross cultural generalizability of the spiritual transcendence scale in India: Spirituality as a universal aspect of human experience. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 45(12), 1888–2002.
- Pruzan, P. (2009). *Rational, ethical, and spiritual perspectives on leadership: Selected writings* (Vol. 7). Peter Lang.
- Sheep, M. L. (2006). Nurturing the whole person: The ethics of workplace spirituality in a society of organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66, 357–375.
- Smuts, J. C. (1927). *Holism and evolution*. London: MacMillan and Co. Limited St. Martin's Street.
- Tencati, A., & Zsolnai, L. (2009). The collaborative enterprise. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 85(3), 367–376.
- Usman, A., & Danish, R. Q. (2010). Leadership spirituality in banking professionals and its impact on organizational commitment. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(3), 185–193.
- Vaughan, M. (2013). *The thinking effect: Rethinking thinking to create great leaders and the new value worker*. Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Zsolnai, L. (2007). New agenda for business ethics. In *Ethics in the economy* (Vol. 1, No. 8, pp. 1–8). Peter Lang Publishing Group in association with GSE Research.

Sharda S. Nandram is Professor of Entrepreneurship and Spirituality at Nyenrode Business Universiteit, The Netherlands. She has cofounded Praan Group under which she utilizes her three decades of rich consulting experience through research in organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. She is the Founder of concepts of Integrating Simplification and Integrative Intelligence. She is well travelled with diverse cross-cultural experience through consulting, research and teaching engagements across Europe (Dutch resident), South America (Surinamese born), North America, Asia (Indian origin). She has two bachelors and two masters' degrees to her credit. One in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Amsterdam and the other in General Economics at the University of Amsterdam. She did her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the Vrije University of Amsterdam. She is a widely published researcher and an internationally

acclaimed Author. Her popular published books include *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland* (2015, Springer), *The Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Essence of Entrepreneurship Through Personal Stories* (2006, Springer), *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (2010, Springer). Amidst well spread professional commitments, she equally enjoys taking care of her family—her Dutch husband and two kids (1997- and 2001-).

Three Pillars of Enlightened Individual Life and Their Realization Through the Practice of Transcendental Meditation

Girish Momaya

1 Introduction

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi described Veda as follows:

Veda is the natural impulse of infinite, eternal, uncreated Pure Consciousness that is at the basis of all creation, evolution, and dissolution in the universe.

Maharishi described the most fundamental level of Nature's functioning as an unbounded field of pure intelligence, or pure consciousness. This is the absolute level of life—transcendental, Nitya (eternal), and Apaurusheya (uncreated). Fully awake within itself, it is at once infinitely silent and infinitely dynamic. It is the unified source and fountainhead of all impulses of natural law, generating through its own self-interacting dynamics the infinite diversity in the universe. At the same time, this one unbounded ocean of consciousness, known in the Vedic Literature as 'Swa'—Atma—the Self, is the origin and essence of all aspects of individual life.

Maharishi brought to light the technique of Transcendental Meditation; an easy, effortless and natural process that leads the mind to experience increasingly finer and finer states of the thinking process and ultimately transcending the finest thinking levels, to reach a unified state of silent and unbounded self-referral awareness or pure consciousness. This is defined as the experience of transcendence, or Atma, the Self, or 'Swa' (Table 1).

G. Momaya (✉)
MERU, Station 24, 6063 NP Vlodrop, The Netherlands
e-mail: momaya@maharishi.net

Table 1 Seven states of consciousness as described by Maharishi and their characteristics

<p>Sleeping Consciousness—<i>Sushupti Chetana</i>—Mind and body resting and rejuvenating in preparation for activity; an important part of the daily cycle for the maintenance of health; no experience of objects of perception, and no experience of oneself. This is termed as Sleeping consciousness</p>
<p>Dreaming Consciousness—<i>Swapna Chetana</i>—Mind and body rejuvenating in preparation for activity; illusory experience of objects and of oneself. The validity of subjective dream experiences requires evaluation outside of the dream state. This is termed as Dreaming consciousness</p>
<p>Waking Consciousness—<i>Jagrat Chetana</i>—In Waking Consciousness, the Mind and body are engaged in activity; oneself and the objects of perception are experienced as bound in space and time</p>
<p>Transcendental Consciousness—Transcendental Meditation and the experience of transcendence—the fourth state of consciousness—<i>Turiya Chetana</i>—Transcendental Meditation is a natural and effortless process that brings settling of the mental activity. During the process of meditation the awareness experiences finer and finer levels of thinking and ultimately transcends the finest level of thinking activity, to reach an expansive experience of inner wakefulness without thoughts, a state of pure awareness or pure consciousness. This experience is defined as transcendence or transcendental consciousness. It is physiologically and experientially distinct from waking, dreaming and sleeping</p>
<p>Cosmic Consciousness—<i>Turiyatit Chetana</i>—Regular experience of transcendental consciousness, alternated with activity during the day, gives rise over time to the fifth state, cosmic consciousness—in which transcendental consciousness co-exists spontaneously with waking, dreaming and sleeping. The inner experience of restful alertness is not lost even during dynamic activity, due to a stress-free, integrated style of functioning established in the nervous system. The essential nature of the Self is realized, in as state of complete inner freedom, the basis for maximum skill in action</p>
<p>God Consciousness—With further refinement of the nervous system, the sixth state, glorified cosmic consciousness or God consciousness—<i>Bhagawad Chetana</i>—develops. This state is characterized by perception of the finest level of relative existence, the glorious celestial sphere of experience, in which the heart flows in universal love for all creation. This refinement and expansion of the heart creates the ground for direct experience of the divine</p>
<p>Unity Consciousness—<i>Brahmi Chetana</i>—as experience moves beyond the celestial to the unified state at the basis of all existence, the seventh state, unity consciousness realizes both inner Self and outer objects of perception to be essentially transcendental wholeness, the highest unity is attained—the unity of Self and non-Self. Every object is perceived in terms of the self. Nothing is foreign to the Self and unity of life prevails as a direct experience</p>

2 Unification at Finer Levels of Nature's Functioning

In Transcendental Meditation the process of transcending is natural, and during this process, the mind goes to finer and finer levels of thought. Let us correlate this experience with how nature functions at finer and finer levels of existence. What is seen is that the laws of nature start to unify, that diversities start to merge into unity, that different laws of nature at one level are seen as expressions of a deeper, unifying value of intelligence operating at a more fundamental level of creation. For example, there is a law of electricity, and another law of magnetism: on the surface, they appear completely different. But as we look deeper into the origin of

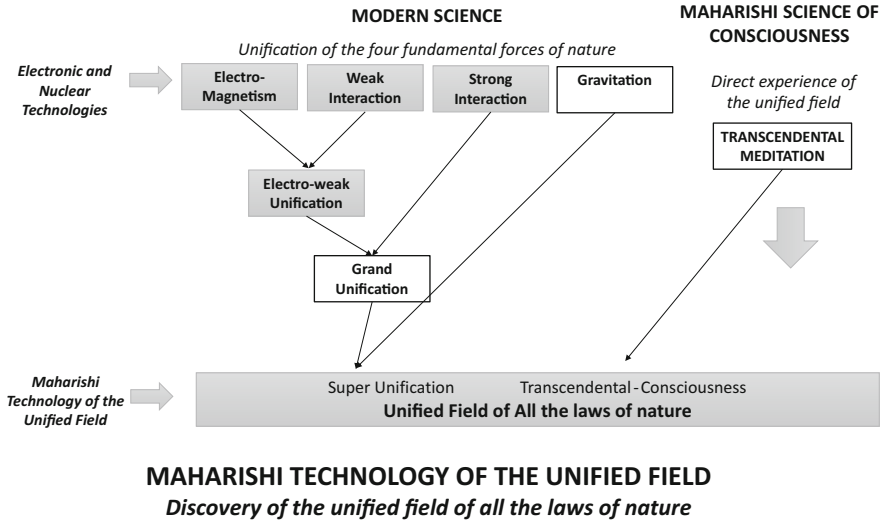


Fig. 1 Maharishi technology of the unified field (Adapted from Pirc et al. 2011)

these seemingly diverse phenomena, we find that they merge into electromagnetism: one field (Fig. 1).

More than 50 years ago, modern science had advanced to the understanding that just four fundamental forces of nature are responsible for all that is happening in the universe. All physical laws could be explained and are sustained by these four forces—electromagnetism, gravity, and the strong and weak nuclear forces. However, continuing research led to yet further unification, uniting first the electromagnetic and weak nuclear force; then further unifying these with the strong nuclear force in the theories of grand unification; and ultimately developing Unified Field theories where all the laws of physics are described as expressions of a single, universal field.

The Unified Field is the common source and fountainhead of all the diverse laws of nature giving rise to the whole universe, not only for all the laws of physics, but also for chemistry, mathematics, and physiology. The Unified Field is the home of all the laws of nature.

3 Experience of the Self, the Foundation of Vedic Studies

The same process of unification of diversity described by modern science is also described in Vedic Science, which has a subjective approach to align with nature’s functioning.

The process of transcending during Transcendental Meditation (TM) opens human awareness to finer, more unified, and holistic and integrated levels of functioning of the mind. This results in greater clarity, creativity and organized

functioning of the brain. Many published research studies have documented TM's many benefits, including clearer thinking, improved memory, improved learning ability, greater creativity, and increased productivity.

The experience of Transcendental Consciousness occurs as this process culminates in transcending the finest levels of thinking and results in pure awareness that is undivided, whole and silent. This is the state of Being—self-referral state of—'Swa', as described in the verses of the Upanishads, Yoga and other Vedic literature. When we transcend, the mind is infused with that level of Being. The qualities of Being—such as harmony, universality, peace, creativity, pure intelligence, infinite silence along with infinite dynamism are enlivened. Human awareness aligns with the evolutionary and nourishing power of natural law that is lively at that level. We are aligning with the perfection of natural law. So when we think, speak, and behave, naturally we carry that influence of wholeness, harmony, balance, and perfection of natural law.

Vedic Science identifies the Unified Field of all the laws of nature as the field of Pure Consciousness, the Self.

Patanjali's Yog-Sutra describes the experience of transcendence, the Self as:

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानं

Tada drashtuh svarupe avasthanam

'Then the observer remains established in his own nature'. (Yog-Sutra 1.3)

वृत्ति सारूप्यमितरत्र

Vritti sarupyam itah atra

'Tendencies of the observer emerge from here (the self-referral state of consciousness) and remain here (within the self-referral state)'.

—Yog-Sutra 1.4

In Mandukya Upanishad it is described as:

शिवम् शांतं अद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः

Shivam shantam adwaitam chaturtham manyante sa atma sa vigyeyah

'That reality which is Shivam—infinite silence, which is Shantam—infinite peace, which is Adwaitam—undivided, is said to be Chaturtham, the fourth (the fourth state of consciousness), which is beyond waking, dreaming, and sleeping. And that is the Self—that is to be known.

—Mandukya Upanishad 7

Vedic literature emphasizes:

आत्मा वा अरे दृष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यः मन्तव्यः निदिध्यासितव्यः

Ātmā vā are drashtavyah shrotavah mantavyah nididhyasitavyah

'That Ātmā (Self) alone, that state of simplest form of awareness alone, is worthy of seeing, hearing, contemplating, and realizing.'

—Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.4.5

And as Maharishi comments, it is only the direct experience of the Self which brings true meaning and practical significance to the Vedic expression of Atma.

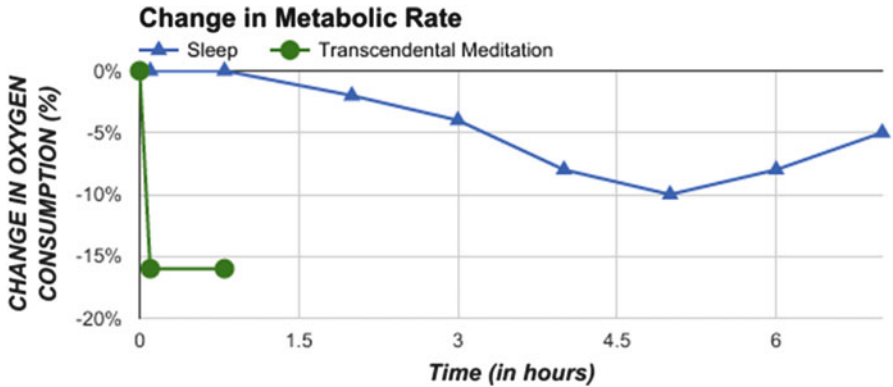


Fig. 2 Reduction of metabolic rate during the Transcendental Meditation technique compared to sleep, $p < 0.005$ (Adapted from Wallace 1970)

‘The settled state of mind that has transcended and has become self-referral, is the Self. These words are from the Upanishads which are the scriptures of Vedanta. Until this experience dawns in the awareness, until the mind engaged in diversity settles into the silence and unity of the transcendental Self, the talks of Brahmatawa are meaningless.’—Maharishi, speaking to Vedanta Scholars at the Kumbh Mela, 15 January 1977.

There have been many scientific studies which show the physiological changes occurring during the practice of Transcendental Meditation. The following studies show greater orderliness of brain functioning and the state of deep rest gained during the practice. These are physiological indicators of the experience of Transcendental Consciousness. EEG coherence increases during and after the practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique. This indicates greater orderliness of brain functioning. EEG coherence has been found to be correlated with higher levels of creativity, intelligence, moral reasoning, neuromuscular efficiency, and with experiences of higher states of consciousness (Levine et al. 1975) (Figs. 2 and 3).

4 Swadharna

The term Dharma in Vedic Science can be defined as remaining and functioning from one’s own essential nature. There is a Vedic saying,

वेदो अखिलो धर्ममूलं

‘Vedo Akhilo Dharma Mulam’—Veda, the unified field of all the laws on nature, is the foundation of all dharma.

When human awareness is established in the unified level of Being—Swa, one’s life is lived in alliance with Natural Law—in alliance with Dharma.

The principle of Swadharna is the indication of individual life spontaneously lived from the level where nature’s evolutionary and nourishing qualities are

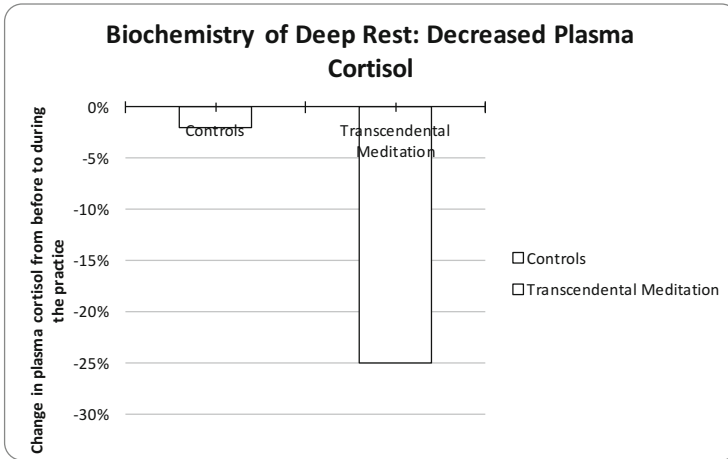


Fig. 3 Physiological changes during Transcendental Consciousness, ($p < 0.03$). Those who practiced the TM technique showed significantly decreased plasma levels of cortisol during the practice, in contrast to controls. Increased plasma cortisol is an endocrine response to stress, and decreased plasma cortisol thus indicates reduced stress (Adapted from Jevning et al. 1975)

always lively. Life expresses itself in all good and all right values. All the laws that govern life are in perfect harmony and express themselves in flawless perfection.

Just like all the laws that sequentially create and sustain a fully grown tree are present lively in a unified wholeness in a seed as it begins to sprout, so are present all the laws of nature that govern and nurture individual life in all good and beneficial ways in a unified wholeness of Being—Swa.

Explaining the teaching of a verse on Swadharna from the Bhagavad Gita (Maharishi 1967) on the highest level, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi says:

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः

Shreyan swadhrmo vigunah paradharmat swanushthitat

Swadharme nidhanam shreyah paradharmo bhayavaha

—*Bhagavad Gita 3.35*

“It is better to remain established in the Dharma of the Self, which is absolute Bliss Consciousness, than to partake of the Dharma of the three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas) and come under the sway of attachment and aversion. For when a man is established in his own Dharma, the Dharma of the Self, his activity is carried on under the direct influence of all mighty Nature and enjoys Its full support; whereas if he partakes the Dharma of another, the Dharma of the three Gunas, he loses the support and patronage of almighty Nature in cosmic life, and his activity becomes limited by the limitations of individual life.”

With regular practice of Transcendental Meditation, one’s awareness is regularly brought to that unified wholeness of Being—Swa, the unified field of natural

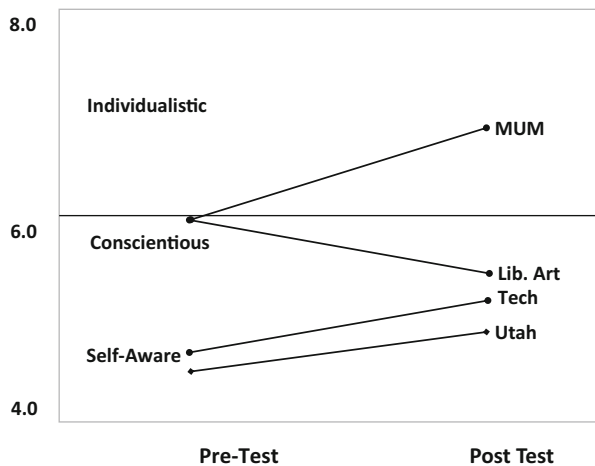
law, the source of all our thinking and action. Aligning our awareness to that level spontaneously brings our thinking and actions in right and evolutionary direction. Life is set on a high pedestal of evolutionary, positive and progressive direction. Individual life is lived in harmony and happiness and when applied to society, society as a whole enjoys progress, harmony and peace.

Some of the many scientific researches validating the growth of Swadharma qualities through Transcendental Meditation:

- **Stabilized Pure Consciousness Associated with the Following:** Subjective Description of Self as Underlying Thought, Feeling and Action (Self-Referral Mode); Objective Measurement of Personality Variables Indicating Higher Scores on a Consciousness Factor; Greater Inner Orientation; Higher Moral Reasoning; Lower State Anxiety; Lower Trait Anxiety; Greater Extraversion; Greater Agreeableness; Greater Emotional Stability; Greater Openness to Experience (Travis et al. 2004).
- **Participants in the Transcendental Meditation programme** showed significantly increased ego development over a 10-year period in contrast to matched control groups; they also displayed increased principled moral reasoning and increased Motivation for Warm Interpersonal Relationships (Chandler et al. 2005) (Figs. 4 and 5).
- **Greater Moral Maturity**

University students who were practicing the Transcendental Meditation Programme showed significantly higher levels of moral maturity in comparison to control students who were not participating in the programme. Controls who were about to learn the practice displayed the same level of moral maturity as those who were not planning to learn, indicating that the observed difference among the Transcendental Meditation participants was due to changes after learning the practice (Nidich 1975) (Fig. 6).

Fig. 4 Ego development results with TM (Adapted from Chandler et al. 2005). Mean Pre-and Posttest Ego Development Scores for four groups of University Alumni showing change over a 10 year period. MUM participants exceed on an average the “barrier” to postconventional development beyond level E6



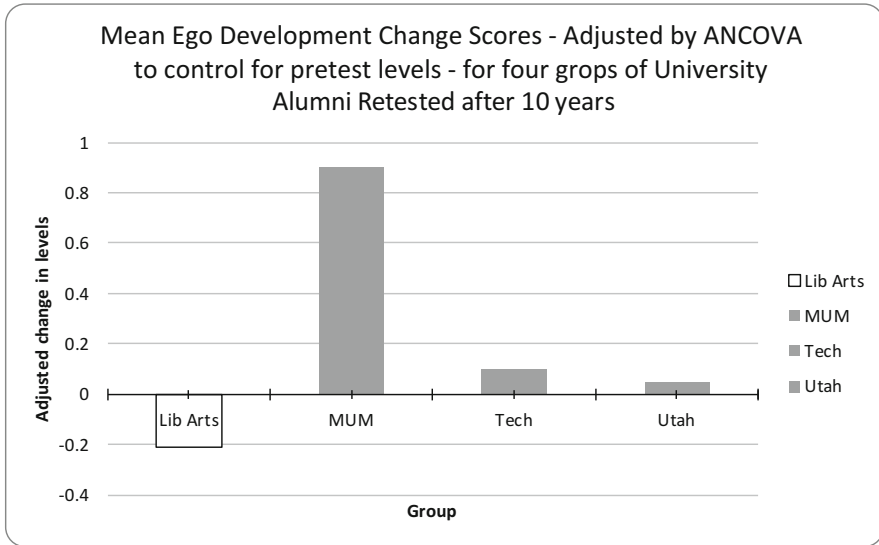


Fig. 5 Ego development results with TM (Adapted from Chandler et al. 2005)

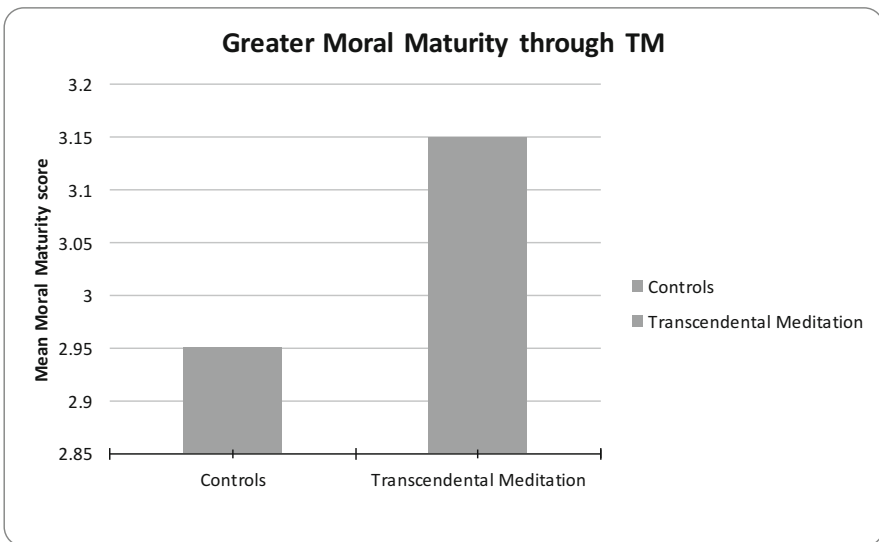


Fig. 6 Moral maturity development results with TM, $p < 0.001$ (Adapted from Nidich 1975)

• **Increased Personal Development**

University students who learned the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Siddhi Programme, in comparison to control students from another university, increased significantly on three measures of personal development and

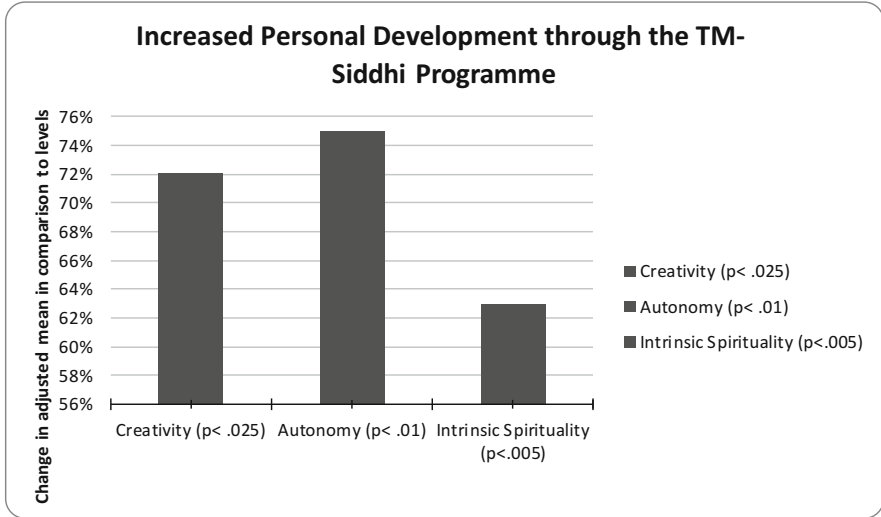


Fig. 7 Personal development results with TM (Adapted from Gelderloos 1987)

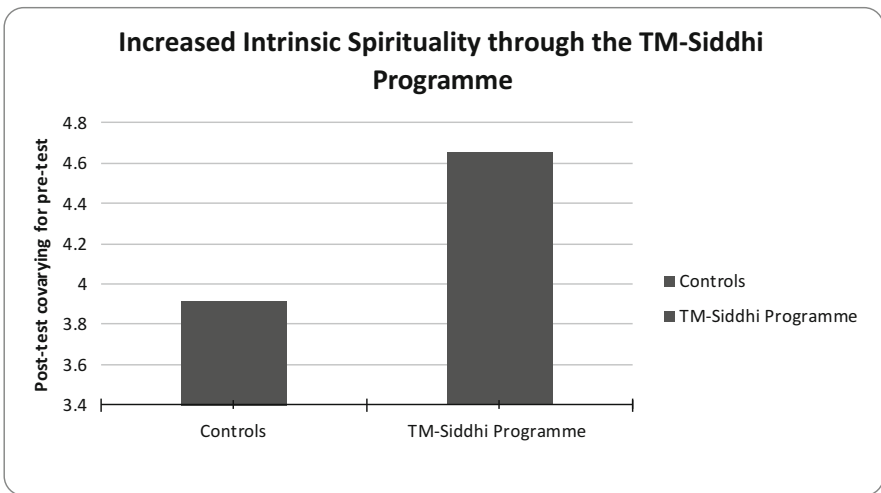


Fig. 8 Intrinsic spirituality development results with TM, $p < 0.005$ (Adapted from Gelderloos 1987)

psychological health—increased creativity, increased autonomy, and increased intrinsic spirituality. The TM-Siddhi Programme participants also improved significantly on an overall measure of well-being and a measure of psychological integration in comparison to the control students (Gelderloos 1987) (Figs. 7 and 8).

5 Swavalamban

The term Swavalamban in Vedic Science refers to the self-referral, self-sufficient quality of Being. If Swadharma can be seen as the fragrance of Being, then Swavalamban can be seen as the nectar of Being—nectar that is nourishing and creating all its expressions. Being as the home of all the laws of nature, is an inexhaustible reservoir of abundance of creativity, intelligence and potential that is available in nature. Creation springs forth utilizing that infinite creative energy and intelligence. The Bhagavad Gita expresses this principle in:

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

Prakritim Swam avashtabhya visrijami punah

Taking recourse to my own Self-referral Nature, I create again and again.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, 9.8

This wholeness is described in the Upanishads as the self-sufficient, self-reliant unified field that expresses itself in infinite diversity with beauty and perfection inherent in the structure and functioning of the laws of nature.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnat Purnamudachyate

Purnasya Purnamadaya Purnamevavashishyate

—*Brihadaranyak Upanishad*, 5.1.1

That is full; this is full. From fullness, fullness comes out.

Taking fullness from fullness, what remains is fullness.

Just like the sap of a plant is a unified, non-changing, universal reality at the basis of all diversities of the plant which provides nourishment to all its aspects, so is this inner self-sufficiency and wisdom that becomes the guiding light of our life. When this influence extends to society, society as a whole becomes self-sufficient, self-reliant, and full of abundance and progress.

Regular practice of Transcendental Meditation opens our awareness naturally and effortlessly to this unified wholeness of Being—Swa. This enlivens the life supporting influence of Natural Law. Our thoughts and actions derive their fullness from the perfection and wholeness qualities of Being.

Some of the many scientific researches validating the growth of Swavalamban qualities through Transcendental Meditation:

- **Increased Self-Actualization** through Transcendental Meditation in Contrast to Other Procedures as Demonstrated by Meta-Analysis; Improvement in the Measured Components of Self-Actualization (Schmidt-Wilk 2000).

Increased Time Competence (Ability to Live in the Present; Ability to Connect Past, Present, and Future Meaningfully); Increased Inner-Directedness (Independence; Self-Supportiveness); Increased Self-Actualizing Value (Holding Values of Self-Actualizing People); Increased Existentiality (Flexibility in Application of Values); Increased Spontaneity; Increased Self-Regard;

Increased Self-Acceptance; Increased Nature of Man Constructive (Sees Man as Essentially Good); Increased Synergy (Sees Opposites of Life as Meaningfully Related); Increased Acceptance of Feelings; Increased Capacity for Intimate Contact (Warm Interpersonal Relationships); Increased Emotional Maturity; Increased Integrative Perspective on Self and World; Increased Resilient Sense of Self.

- **More Positive Self-Concept**

Higher Self-Esteem; Better Opinion of Oneself; Better Feelings about Basic Identity; Greater Sense of Personal Worth and Adequacy; Lower Personality Disorder (Less Basic Personality Defects and Weaknesses); Less Likely to Qualify Self-Description; Higher Moral-Ethical Self: Greater Satisfaction with One’s Moral Worth and with One’s Relationship to God and Religion (Nystul and Garde 1977).

- **Field Independence Correlated with College Art Achievement**

Among undergraduate art students, field independence was significantly correlated with grade point average (academic performance) in their current classes, as well as with self-evaluation of artistic ability in the areas of drawing, composition, and artistic idea formation (Fergusson 1992) (Figs. 9 and 10).

- **Effects of Transcendental Meditation on Self-Identity Indices and Personality**

After 1 month of practice of the Transcendental Meditation Programme, individuals developed a more strongly defined sense of self-concept, in comparison to matched controls. They also reported that their ‘actual’ self was closer to their ‘ideal’ self (Turnbull and Norris 1982) (Fig. 11).

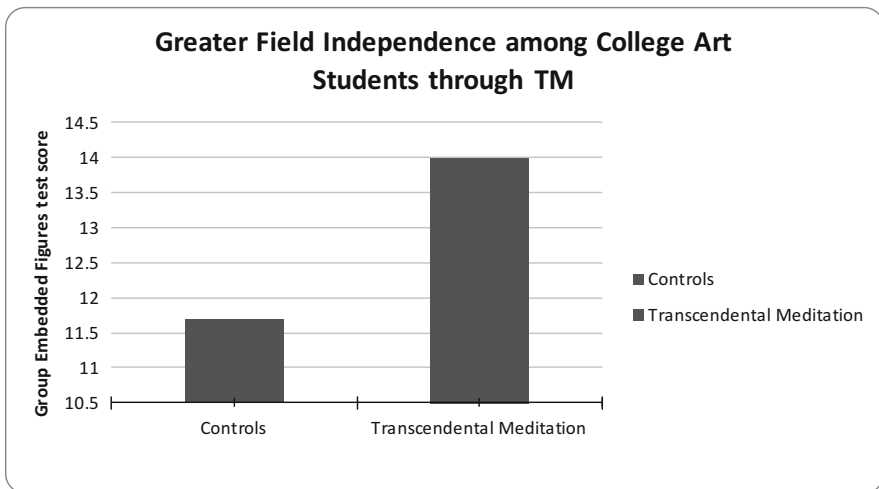


Fig. 9 Field independence development results with TM (Adapted from Fergusson 1992)

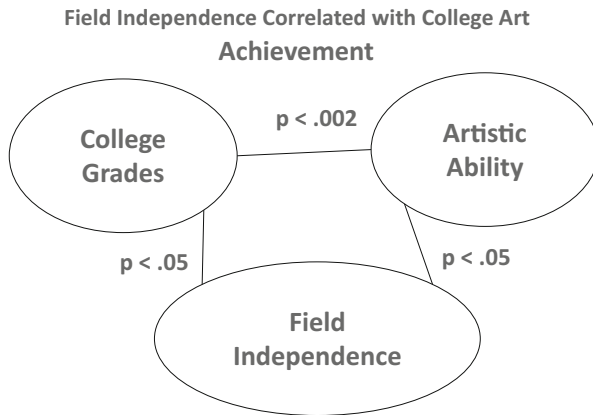


Fig. 10 Field independence correlation results with TM (Adapted from Fergusson 1992)

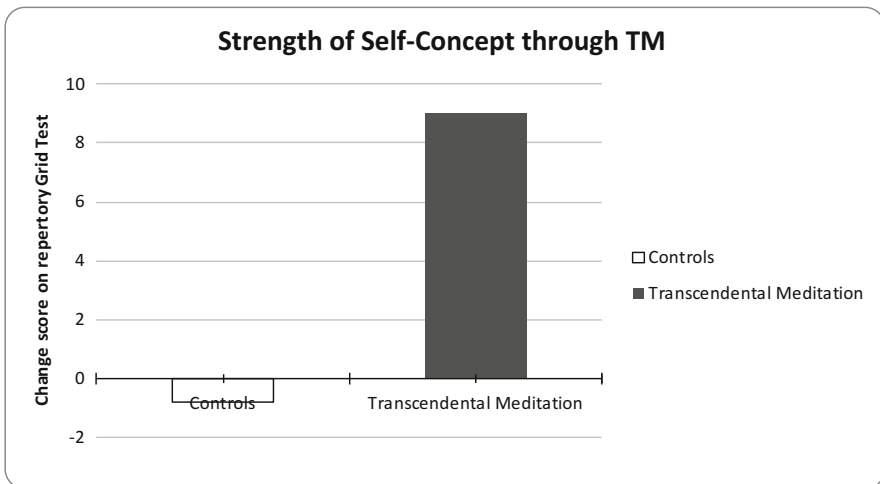


Fig. 11 Self-concept development results with TM (Adapted from Turnbull and Norris 1982)

6 Swaraaj

Every stratum of creation is governed by some laws of nature. Every law of nature has its own governing intelligence.

Swaraaj is a Vedic principle that has its foundation in the quality of administrative intelligence—the organizing power inherent on the level of Being—the unified field of all the laws of nature.

Within the structure and function of every law of nature lies the corresponding organizing power of natural law. This organizing power becomes more holistic and comprehensive at deeper and more holistic levels of natural law. For example, administrative intelligence that lies at the level of electricity is limited to the laws of electricity, and the administrative intelligence that lies at the level of magnetism is limited to the laws of magnetism. However, when we observe much deeper and unified levels, at the level of the electromagnetic field, from where both electricity as well as magnetism emerge, we find that one holistic field of administrative intelligence governs both of these fields.

The organizing power of a leaf is limited to the functioning of the law of photosynthesis which transforms sunlight into the energy of the tree and in turn produces oxygen. However at the level of the branch, all the laws that uphold the leaves, flowers, and fruits are available.

Transcendental Meditation naturally aligns human awareness to the unified wholeness of Being—Swa, Atma, the source of all our creativity and intelligence. It aligns human awareness with the unified field of natural law, the home of all the laws of nature which governs the infinite diversity of creation. This brings spontaneous support of the organizing power of natural law to human life.

When applied to society, the principle of Swaraj extends to the Vedic principle of Ram Raj, an enlightened administration of society based on collective harmony with Nature's government. Collective consciousness of society enjoys coherence and harmony, resulting in social happiness and progress.

राम राज दुःख कह न व्यापा

Ram Raj dukh kahu na vyapa.—Ram Charita Manas, Uttarkand, 20.1

In the reign of Ram suffering belonged to no one.

Some of the many scientific researches validating the growth of Swaraj qualities through Transcendental Meditation:

- **Leadership Development and Self-Development:** An Empirical Study (McCollum 1999). Increased Leadership Behaviour; Improvement in Each Sub-scale of Leadership Behaviour (Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way, Encouraging the Heart) (Fig. 12).
- **Consciousness-Based Management Development**
Case Studies of International Top Management Teams:
Managers who learned the Transcendental Meditation programme reported greater alertness, cognitive growth, improved health, emotional development, better relations at work and at home, and more effective task-related behavior (Schmidt-Wilk 2000) (Fig. 13).
- **Increased Job Satisfaction in Executives and Workers**
A study of executives and workers in the automotive industry found that after 3 months of regular practice of the Transcendental Meditation Programme, employees showed increased job satisfaction, in comparison to controls from the same work sites (Alexander et al. 1993) (Fig. 14).

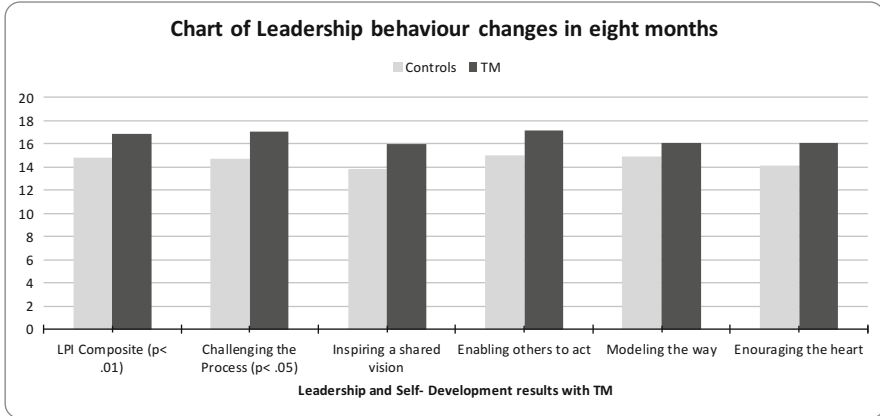


Fig. 12 Leadership and self development (Adapted from McCollum 1999)

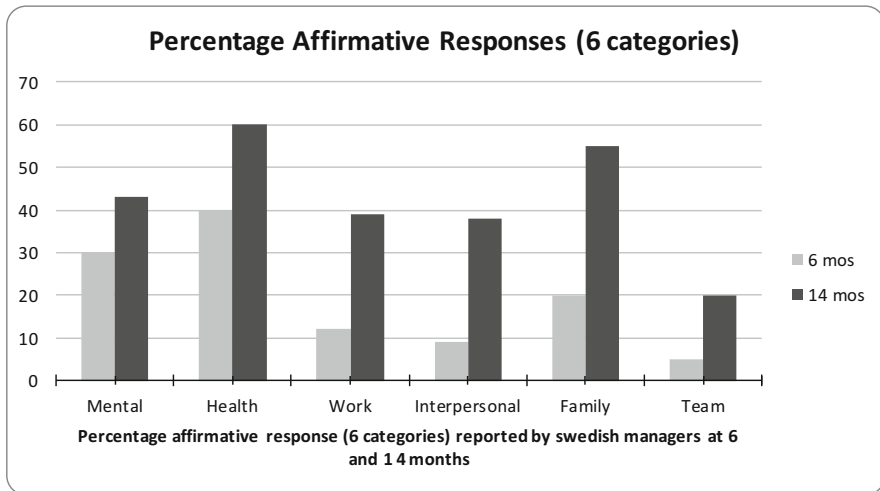


Fig. 13 Affirmative responses with TM (Adapted from Schmidt-Wilk 2000)

• **Integration of Brain Functioning**

High levels of EEG coherence measured during Transcendental Meditation are significantly correlated with higher creativity, greater efficiency in learning new concepts, more principled moral reasoning, higher verbal intelligence (IQ), less neuroticism, higher academic achievement, clearer experiences of Transcendental Consciousness, and greater neurological efficiency (Orme-Johnson et al. 1981; TM Collected Chapters 1989) (Fig. 15).

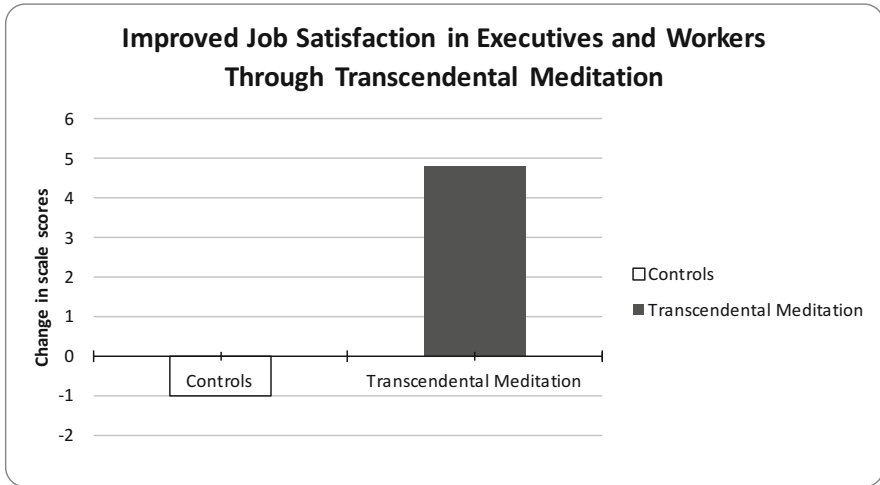


Fig. 14 Improved job satisfaction with TM (Adapted from Alexander et al. 1993)

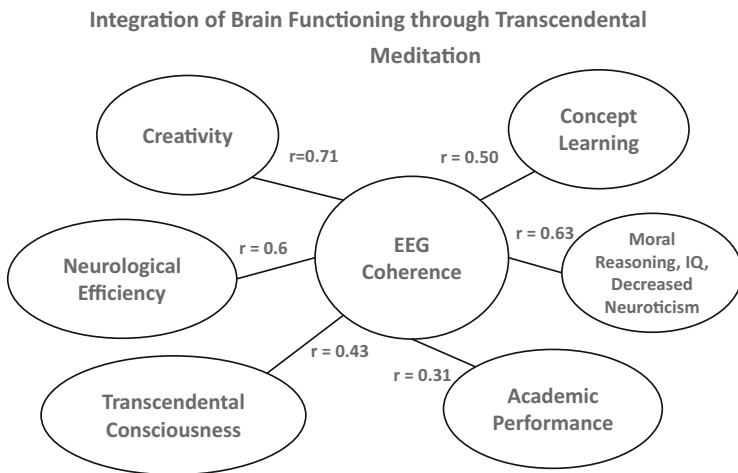


Fig. 15 Integration of brain functioning with TM (Adapted from Orme-Johnson et al. 1981)

7 Conclusion

Swadharma puts life in alliance with natural law. Spontaneously our thoughts and actions are right and in an evolutionary direction. Swavalamban enlivens the quality of inner self-sufficiency and stability in our awareness and unfolds the inner treasure of creativity and intelligence. Swaraj expresses perfection of administrative intelligence in nature present at the level of Being. Human life becomes established and expresses itself in freedom and perfection. For holistic evolution of

human life it is essential that these qualities emerging from the wholeness of Atma—Swa or Being—are enlivened in life. Swadharma, Swavalamban, and Swaraj are the life-supporting qualities of consciousness, qualities of natural law, emanating from Being. When these qualities blossom simultaneously, life blossoms in its full glory. All of these beautiful qualities of Being easily and spontaneously become enlivened in the individual life through the practice of Transcendental Meditation.

Reflective Questions

1. How would you describe the similarity in the process of unification of diversity at the finer levels of nature's functioning as described in modern science with the process described in the subjective approach of Vedic Science?
2. What do the physiological changes observed during Transcendental Meditation indicate?
3. Describe the qualities of human behavior that are enlivened with the blossoming of Swadharma quality.
4. Give some examples of the Swavalamban quality expressed in nature as well as in human behavior.
5. Which fundamental quality of Nature is represented by Swaraj?
6. Describe some of the expressed qualities of Swaraj which are enlivened in our awareness through the regular practice of Transcendental Meditation.

References

- Alexander, C. N., et al. (1993). Effects of the Transcendental Meditation program on stress reduction health, and employee development. *Anxiety, Stress and Coping: An International Journal*, 6, 245–262.
- Chandler, H. M., Alexander, C. N., & Heaton, D. P. (2005). The Transcendental Meditation program and post-conventional self-development: A 10-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 17, 93–121.
- Fergusson, L. C. (1992). Field independence and art achievement in meditating and non-meditating college students. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 75, 1171–1175.
- Gelderloos, P. (1987). Psychological health and development of students at Maharishi International University: A controlled longitudinal study. *Journal of Modern Science and Vedic Science*, 1, 471–487.
- Jevning, R., Wilson, A., VanderLaan, E., & Levine, S. (1975). *Plasma prolactin and cortisol during Transcendental Meditation*. In The Endocrine Society Program 57th Annual Meeting (Abstract).
- Levine, P. H., Herbert, J. R., Haynes, C. T., & Strobel, U. (1975). *EEG coherence during the Transcendental Meditation technique*. Collected chapters, Scientific research on the Transcendental Meditation Program, Vol. 1, Chapter 20. MERU Press.
- Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (1967). *Bhagavad Gita—A new translation and commentary*, Chapters 1 to 6.
- McCollum, B. (1999). Leadership development and self-development: An empirical study. *Career Development International*, 4, 149–154.

- Nidich, S. I. (1975). *A study of the relationship of the Transcendental Meditation program to Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning*. Doctoral thesis, Department of Learning and Development, College of Education, University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 36, 4361A–4362A.
- Nystul, M. S., & Garde, M. (1977). Comparison of self-concepts of Transcendental Meditators and non-meditators. *Psychological Reports*, 41, 303–306.
- Orme-Johnson, D. W., Clements, G., Haynes, C. T., & Badaoui, K. (1981). *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 13, 211–217; 15, 151–157.
- Pirc, L., Momaya, G., & Brown, S. (2011). *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's insight into Vedanta, the ultimate knowledge of life, and its application to bring world peace. Modern perspectives on Vedanta*. In Proceedings of the 20th International congress of Vedanta, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, pp. 34–57.
- Schmidt-Wilk, J. (2000). Consciousness-based management development: Case studies of international top management teams. *Journal of Transnational Management Development*, 5, 61–85.
- Scientific research on the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Siddhi Programme: Collected chapters* (Vol. 1, pp. 208–212, 1977; Vol. 4, pp. 2245–2266, 1989).
- 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, 401–420.
- Turnbull, M. J., & Norris, H. (1982). Effects of Transcendental Meditation on self-identity indices and personality. *British Journal of Psychology*, 73, 57–68.
- Wallace, R. K. (1970). Physiological effects of Transcendental Meditation. *Science*, 167, 1751–1754.

Girish Momaya is a Director of Stichting Maharishi European Research University, a Dutch Foundation providing education, training and services in the fields of Vedic Sciences, Ayurveda health care and social well-being. He is also a Director of the International Maharishi Ayurveda Foundation—The Netherlands. Dr. Momaya spent many years working under the guidance of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the great scientist of consciousness and Founder of the Transcendental Meditation Programme. He received extensive instruction and training from Maharishi in all aspects of Vedic Science.

Listening to Your Intuition: An Integrative Approach to Navigating VUCA

Sharda S. Nandram and Puneet K. Bindlish

1 Defining Intuition

Intuition has been induced from the Latin verb “**intueri**” which means “to look upon”. Entrepreneurs claim a high use of intuition in different types of activities. In entrepreneurship literature there are different definitions available, however the term is rather being used as an umbrella concept which means that various dimensions and perspectives of intuition are being included. Some definitions include: the **source of intuition** (thoughts, patterns or associations), the **antecedents of intuition** (heuristics, schemas, domain specific expertise, and the existence of implicit theories, formal knowledge or beliefs), the **expression of the intuition** (gut feelings, hunches, feelings) or the **result of this information processing** (judgements, insights). Some definitions solely address the **process of perceiving and sorting data** through cognitive or affective information processing (non-conscious, affective, beyond rational, experiential, apprehension, recognition). In entrepreneurship there seems to be some consensus regarding the following definition of intuition. Intuitions are affectively charged judgments that arise through rapid, nonconscious, and holistic associations (Dane and Pratt 2007, p. 40).

S.S. Nandram

Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

P.K. Bindlish (✉)

Praan Group, Bovenpolderweg 1, 1165 LH, Halfweg, The Netherlands

e-mail: puneet@praan.nl

2 The Role of Intuition in an Entrepreneurs' Life

For coping with the Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity (VUCA) world accessing intuitive knowledge could lead to some solutions in an entrepreneur's life. Intuition does not only enhance the entrepreneurs quality of life, but also influences the customers and other partners within the stakeholder's framework. It could enhance vision development, increase understanding and clarity and lead to insights on how to simplify complexity in the context of management and entrepreneurship.

Some authors such as Blume and Covin assume that entrepreneurs attribute intuition to many types of decisions as a default option when they cannot rationalize their decisions. There are different activities in an entrepreneurs' life where intuition can be used. In a study conducted by Norlyk et al. (2009) entrepreneurs are using intuition to take general decisions such as hiring an employee, making an investment and buying products. Mitchell et al. (2005) summarize the following purposes: creativity, effective management decision making and better sales forecasting.

In the following overview we find some citations of definitions of intuition and its use as were expressed by entrepreneurs in a series of interviews that we conducted:

When I say intuition, I'm talking about a gut level feel, almost a physical or a thought coming or something that's deeper than that, deeper than a thought coming.

When I talk about intuitive feelings, it's really that. What's the feeling? How does this feel? And, often there's no logic," Oh, I feel that way because! "you know, sometimes it's like, can't put my finger on it, it's just a feeling, that it wouldn't be right to work with this person. Something is not working.

Intuition is . . . It's a knowingness, it's a greater level of experience that doesn't take intellectual pondering, or intellectual analysis. It's like: I know this is right because something is telling me from inside that is supporting this, at this feeling and thought level. It's not a thought, it's finer than a thought level, and that one knows that this feels . . . good. You know, maybe it's comparative to a great athlete who . . . is in the zone or something like that. You know, he just feel that, he can't express what the experience is, but, he just experiences it.

Almost every day I make use of my intuition. There are days that I wonder whether my investments and efforts will bring me some return or not but overall I have the strong feeling that I will be successful with this venture. There is a need for my service, all responses so far are very positive, I am only active now for a year, and things need more time. My meetings with the clients are very intuitive. I have prepared a checklist for assessing them but usually I do not stick to this list. I formulate most of my questions during the course of a session.

Following my intuition helped me in designing how to organize and set up activities that are relevant for my business and for earning an income. I had this idea of setting up a business not driven by financial value but by social capital. Offering a place where people can come for working together, for sharing, for meeting. A model of social entrepreneurship and solidarity.

3 Types of Intuition

As everyone has access to intuition, so do entrepreneurs. But how they actively manage intuition effectively in decision making processes varies. Some entrepreneurs are more sensitive towards it than others. They know how to relate to more subjective forms of information and usually it is an interplay between rational and intuitive information. The whole process of decision making becomes an iterative process of rationality and subjectivity as entrepreneurs often do not have access to objective information. Currently, we can distinguish different forms of intuition that are accessed in different ways: expert intuition, intellectual intuition, problem solving intuition, moral and spiritual intuition.

Expert Intuition

Those who consider intuition as expertise, need to develop them by deliberate practice of that expertise in regular contexts. Kahneman (2011, p. 241) states: “In the absence of valid cues intuitive hits are due either to luck or to lies. If you find this conclusion surprising, you still have a lingering belief that intuition is magic. Remember this rule: intuition cannot be trusted in the absence of stable regularities in the environment”. If we follow this argument we would state that in the VUCA world intuition would lack validity as the conditions are highly irregular. Is it possible to distinguish intuitions that are likely to be valid from those that are likely to be bogus? According to Kahneman, if the environment is sufficiently regular and if the judge has had a chance to learn its regularities, the associative machinery will recognize situations and generate quick and accurate predictions and decisions.

Intellectual Intuition

Bunge (1962) suggests that, from a logical point of view, intuition is a product of fundamentalism and infallibilism, both of which are untenable. He also proposes that, from a psychological point of view, intuition is the product of confusion. In this regard he suggests that intuitions can, at best, be viewed as unformulated and untested theories. According to Bunge (1962), the various forms of intuition resemble other forms of knowing and reasoning in that they must be controlled if they are to be useful. He places intellectual intuition between sensible intuition and pure intuition. Moreover, he warns that “if it is out of control however, it leads to sterility” (Bunge 1962, p. 111). He considers intuition as an important category of thinking, and he suggests: “*A constructive attitude toward the problem of intuition involves the following: a careful analysis of the many meanings of the term and a parsimonious use of it; an empirical and theoretical analysis, in the context of scientific psychology, of this remarkable mixture of experience and reason; a refinement of the products of intuition by means of the elaboration of concepts and propositions that give precision to, subsume, and enrich the intuitive ones*” (Bunge 1962, p. 111).

Intellectual intuition gives direct, unarticulated prehensions of singular concrete objects, which is referred to as knowledge by acquaintance. As such, it lies between

sensibility and discursive reason. Bunge also distinguishes sensible intuition. Sensible intuition serves as a raw material for knowledge gained through description or inferred knowledge. Therefore, sensible intuition is prescientific.

Problem Solving Intuition

Dane and Pratt (2007) prefer to distinguish types of intuition to solve a problem or decision making dilemma. Following Simon (1996) Dane and Pratt define expert intuition as: “a pattern matching process whereby information is encoded and chunked into patterns, stored in schemas, and then equated with environmental stimuli” (Simon 1996; Dane and Pratt 2007, 42:43). In referring to Simon’s work, Kahneman (2011, p. 237) states: “intuition is nothing more than recognition”. The mystery of knowing without knowing is not a distinctive feature of intuition. Rather, according to this author, it is a part of mental life. In line with this reasoning, we suggest that decision making in the absence of a sufficient amount of rational information should not be studied from a mystical foundation but rather from an understanding of mental functions. Dane and Pratt (2009) give three reasons why they do not label problem solving intuition as similar to expert intuition. They state that other types such as the creative intuition also could rely upon domain specific knowledge or expertise; expertise can be seen as antecedent of intuitive judgement hence it results in pollution of the label of intuition as problem solving intuition can be based on simple heuristics as well as on expertise (Tversky and Kahneman 1974). Problem solving intuitions are mainly about convergence in pattern matching which involves the question: does it belong to this category or not? It can be based on extensive experience or just stereotyping. Furthermore it can be linked to the intensity of affect whereby problem solving intuition characterizes low levels of affective intensity (Sadler-Smith and Shefy 2004) and it is usually occurring fast.

Moral Intuition

Moral intuition focuses on ethical dilemmas and describes the role of intuition in moral judgements. Dane and Pratt (2009) argue that many if not all moral judgements stem from non-conscious affective processes (Greene and Haidt 2002). Some characteristics labeled in terms of right or wrong, are non-conscious as people often cannot explain why they think something is right or wrong. It furthermore may involve pattern matching as is the case in problem solving intuition and it also occurs rapidly. Though intuition has often been positioned as a theme for philosophy, so far the philosophical influence on understanding intuition has remained out of scope as well. Moral intuitions characterizes intense emotions having a considerable degree of affective arousal expressed in terms of strong and clear convictions, bitterness and Self-Righteousness (Haidt 2007).

Entrepreneurial/Creative Intuition

Dutta and Crossan define entrepreneurial intuition as “fusing disparate elements of knowledge to create novel combinations” (Dutta and Crossan 2005, p. 436). The assumption is that entrepreneurs rely on creative capacity to recognize gaps and to

identify possibilities. This is different than expert intuition, which emphasizes the complex knowledge base of the individual as the primary means by which patterns are recognized. Blume and Covin (2011, p. 138) define entrepreneurial intuition as “intuition involving entrepreneurial process-related matters”, while Mitchell et al. (2005, p. 667) define the concept as “the dynamic process by which entrepreneurial alertness cognitions interact with domain competence (e.g. culture, industry, specific circumstances, technology) to bring to consciousness an opportunity to create new value”. Baldacchino et al. (2015) conclude that this is the most elaborate definition of entrepreneurial intuition, although they do not situate their definition in the distinct domain of entrepreneurship. At the same time, they conclude that; “while promising, Mitchel et al.’s idea that entrepreneurial intuition is a distinct construct from intuition generally is yet to be empirically validated” (Baldacchino et al. 2015, p. 6). Dane and Pratt (2009) use the term creative intuition to distinguish it from the moral and problem solving intuition. While these two are aiming convergence through pattern matching, the creative intuition is about synthesis of disparate elements that are fused together in a novel combination (Crossan et al. 1999) and thus the cognitive association is more divergent.

Spiritual Intuition

In spiritual traditions intuition is being considered as the truth. According to Vaughan (1979, p. 49) “Intuition is true in the same way that sensation is true: it is your experience, and you know it for what it is. In this sense, intuition is much more than a hunch or vague feeling. It may at times come into awareness only marginally, and seem vague, but if given attention, it can become increasingly clear and useful.” Also Plato considered intuition as a reliable source of knowledge (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 7). Aristotle saw knowledge that exists without proof as intuitive reason. It is a leap of understanding, a grasping of a larger concept reachable by other intellectual means, yet still fundamentally an intellectual process (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 7). According to him, if you begin deductive reasoning, an intuitively known truth or an inductive-empirical one is needed. He believed that this is ranked above the universals of science and is indispensable for scientific inquiry.

Vaughan (1979, p. 4) suggests; “At any given moment one is conscious of only a small portion of what one knows. Intuition allows one to draw on that vast storehouse of unconscious knowledge that includes not only everything that one has experienced or learned, either consciously or subliminally, but also the infinite reservoir of the collective or universal conscious, in which individual separateness and ego boundaries are transcended”. According to Aristotle; “No other kind of thought except intuition is more accurate than scientific knowledge” (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 7).

William of Ockham saw intuition as a cognitive process for perceiving non-existing objects (such as ideal objects) through the agency of God. “Intuitive cognition is the ability to picture that which is not perceived by the senses” (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 12). According to Descartes one reaches better conclusions by using his rational intuition as this was the only way to gain certain

knowledge: “Intuitive knowledge is an illumination of the soul, whereby it beholds in the light of God those things which it pleases Him to reveal to us by a direct impression of divine clearness in our understanding which in this is not considered as an agent, but only as receiving the rays of divinity” (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 13). Spinoze considered intuition as a category in a tripartite division of all knowledge; the others are apprehension and rational thought. The aim is to gain knowledge that is clear and certain and associated with standard knowledge and divorced from mysticism (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 13). For Husserl: “A source of authority for knowledge, that whatever presents itself in ‘intuition’ in primordial form (as it were in its bodily reality), is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it then presents itself” (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 31). In the entrepreneurship literature so far, the spiritual type of intuition has not been studied in empirical practices.

4 Intuition as True Knowledge in Ancient Indian Perspective

There is not much known about the processing of this true knowledge. According to Vaughan (1979, p. 3): “Intuition is known to everyone by experience, yet frequently remains repressed or underdeveloped. As a psychological function, like sensation, feeling and thinking, intuition is a way of knowing. When we know something intuitively, it invariably has the ring of truth; yet often we do not know how we know what we know”. In the teachings of Plotinus, true knowledge is obtained through a special kind of seeing. “To see and to have seen is no longer reason. It is greater than reason, before reason, and above reason, as is also the desire to see. . . . Therefore what is seen is indeed difficult to convey: for how can a man describe as other than himself that which, when he perceived it, seemed not other, but indeed one with himself?” (Noddings and Shore 1984, p. 8). Here the observer has the sensation of union with the object that he or she is contacting. Eastern philosophies such as several Indian Vedic philosophical schools of thought have given intuition a significant place in understanding our mind and experiences. There is an agreement that there is a lower and a higher mind. Sri Aurobindo (1982–1950) described in detail the several levels of our higher mind, claiming the intuitive mind as one where a pure form of intuition could hail from (Sri Aurobindo 2006a, b). Intuition is a function of consciousness, which: goes beyond the ordinary senses and mental mind, does not have a logic sequence, has multiple sources, and is connected to our intellect and emotions. We can only become aware of the power of pure intuition if we use instruments that extend beyond the sensual ways of knowing. Terms such as impulses, gut instincts are often used to label intuition in daily life. However in the teachings of Sri Aurobindo (2006a, b) our impulses, desires and habits obstruct the stream of this perception from the pure intuition. The technology of yoga (Sri Aurobindo 1993) aims to remove these obstructions by a process of purification.

To understand the pure or spiritual intuition we need to put Sri Aurobindo’s teaching in the light of several levels of consciousness and accordingly we can define intuition as follows: On the material level of consciousness, we all appear to

be separate; we are in touch with the body's instinctual needs. We could state that here intuition is the gut feeling, instinct or hunch (Miller and Ireland 2005) which we find in the scholarly literature. On the vital level of consciousness, we are in touch with our affective drives, cravings, desires, emotions. Here we could state that affective aspects such as intuitive feelings (Sadler-Smith and Shefy 2004) may hail from this level of consciousness. On the mental level of consciousness, we can grasp and put order into both the lower and higher drives and learn to navigate through them with clarity. Intuition can sometimes be of the mind, a flash of awareness whereby various fragments or ideas in the mind all of a sudden come together and take on a cohesive form. This source may be similar to what we call expert intuition in the scholarly management literature (Simon 1987; Kahneman 2003, 2011). According to the Indian Vedic schools there are also higher forms of intuition coming from higher or transcendent parts of the mind. This stems from the soul or directly from the universal consciousness. Intuition can come in the form of divine intervention, premonition. Intuition of this order is transmitted in an absolutely pure form (Maharishi Yogi 1986). Human beings can only grasp it according to their level of purity, mental clarity and development and level of evolution in consciousness. Therefore, spiritual practice helps one open only to higher consciousness, the domain of intuition, but also to grasp it in the purest and most lucid form.

Sri Aurobindo argues that the mind acts as an instrument. What he means is that some knowledge is not knowable by thought, but only by putting effort in developing one's consciousness. *"The Unknown is not the Unknowable; it need not remain the unknown for us, unless we choose to ignorance or persist in our first limitations. For to all things that are not knowable, all things in the universe, there correspond in that universe faculties which can take cognizance of them, and in man, the microcosm, these faculties are always existent and at a certain stage capable of development. We may choose not to develop them; where they are partially developed, we may discourage and impose on them a kind of atrophy. But, fundamentally, all possible knowledge is knowledge within the power of humanity. And since in man there is the inalienable impulse of Nature towards self-realization, no struggle of the intellect to limit the action of our capacities within a determined area can forever prevail"*. Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine: (2006 edition. Book 1, chapter 1 The Human Aspiration: p. 15.)*

Sri Aurobindo explains that we do not know the root-knowledge. Through science we seek to constantly minimize causes of error, pain and suffering but what we are actually doing is getting to know the processes of phenomenon without knowing the essence of them, the root of knowledge. Therefore we cannot control it.

But if we could grasp the essential nature and the essential cause of error, suffering and death, we might hope to arrive at a mastery over them which should be not relative but entire. We might hope even to eliminate them altogether and justify the dominant instinct of our nature by the conquest of that absolute good, bliss, knowledge and immortality which our intuitions perceive as the true and ultimate condition of the human being Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine: (2006 edition. Book 1, chapter 7 The Ego and the Dualities: p. 63)*.

Working of the Mind, the Higher Mind and Role of Intuition

“Mind cannot be our last conscious expression because mind is fundamentally an ignorance seeking for knowledge...” (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006, Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 43). Sri Aurobindo uses the term Mind in a different way than usually is being applied. *The “Mind” in the ordinary use of the word covers indiscriminately the whole consciousness, for man is a mental being and mentalises everything: but in the language of this yoga the words “mind” and “mental” are used to connote specially the part of the nature which has to do with cognition and intelligence, with ideas, with mental or thought perceptions, the reactions of thought to things, with the truly mental movements and formations, mental vision and will, etc., that are part of his intelligences*” (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006, Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 54). To describe and explain the phenomenon of consciousness, Sri Aurobindo uses lower mind and higher mind. Sri Aurobindo has extensively described and explained the development of our consciousness. In essence it is about two movements, one which he calls psychicisation and the other spiritualization.

Both are necessary and there is no sequence. For some people, sometimes the first process starts in the heart, for others the second process starts in the head and sometimes both are active. There is no rule for the sequence. What Sri Aurobindo means by psychicisation is the process of opening the heart core to what is behind it. He labels this as ascending of consciousness which could be thought of as concentric conversions of planes of being. These are the sheaths of consciousness. The process of spiritualization is about opening of the mind to all that is above, the descending process. Here he also talks about conversion but now in an upward direction while the previous one can be thought of in horizontal direction. The process of opening the heart is as searching for the psychic being in us and bringing its knowledge to the forefront in what we do, guided by our Inner Divinity. Opening of the mind is as searching for the higher mind, the higher Divinity. Sri Aurobindo also uses the concepts lower being and higher being. The vertical conversions take place in the higher being and the horizontal conversions take place in the lower being. *“Psychicisation means the change of the lower nature bringing right vision into the mind, right impulse and felling into the vital, right movement and habit into the physical...”* (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006, Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 209). The first process goes inward and the second process goes upward.

It is the vertical conversions which brings intuition into play and which occur between the conversion of the Illumined Mind and the Overmind. The Intuitive Mind is placed between these two aspects of the Higher Mind. *“Thus rising beyond intellect through illuminated higher mind to the intuitive consciousness, we begin to look at everything not from the intellect range or through intellect as an instrument, but from a greater intuitive height and through an intuitivised will, feeling, emotion, sensation and physical contact. So, proceeding from Intuition to a greater Overmind height, there is a new conversion and we look at and experience everything from the overmind consciousness and through a mind, heart, vital and body surcharged with the overmind though, sight, will, feeling, sensation, play of*

force and contact" (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006. Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 62).

In Sri Aurobindo's explanation there is a last conversion which is that of the supramental. This brings us beyond the Ignorance and there is no longer need of conversions. One could consider the Illumined mind as the channel to get intuitions. *"Moreover, what is thought-knowledge in the Higher Mind becomes illumination in the Illumined Mind and direct intimate vision in the Intuition. But the Intuition sees in flashes and combines through a constant play of light- through revelations, inspirations, intuitions, swift discriminations"* (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006. Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 63).

Let us understand the citation on intuition from Sri Aurobindo: *"For if we examine carefully, we shall find that intuition is our first teacher. Intuition always stands veiled behind our mental operations. Intuition brings to man those brilliant messages from the Unknown which are the beginning of this higher knowledge. Reason only comes in afterwards to see what profit it can have of the shining harvest. Intuition gives us that idea of something behind and beyond all that we know and seem to be which pursues man always in contradiction of his lower reason and all his normal experience and impels him to formulate that formless perception in the more positive ideas of God, Immortality, Heaven and the rest by which we strive to express it to the mind. For intuition is as strong as Nature herself from whose very soul it has sprung and cares nothing for the contradictions of reason or the denials of experience. It knows what is because it is, because itself it is of that and has come from that, and will not yield it to the judgment of what merely becomes and appears. What the Intuition tells us of, is not so much Existence as the Existent, for it proceeds from that one point of light in us which gives it its advantage, that sometimes opened door in our self-awareness".* Sri Aurobindo, Life Divine: (Book 1, chapter 8: the Methods of Vedanta Knowledge, p. 73.). The citation tells us that Sri Aurobindo considers intuition as signals of true knowledge which complements the rational ways of knowing. Intuition seems to be that what is there and it requires from us certain ability to access it. It is like nature and pure. Acquiring it requires going beyond the ordinary mind.

In Sri Aurobindo's teaching the processes of ascending and descending (horizontal and vertical conversions) are not independent. They need to get together. Consciousness development needs the nexus of both processes and the most important part is when the Divine force (or Shakti or the power of the Mother) comes down and takes hold of our Inner Self which shapes our thinking and behaviors in life. *"Only a little of the inner being escapes through these centers into the outer life, but that little is the best part of ourselves and responsible for our art, poetry, philosophy, ideals, religious aspirations, efforts at knowledge and perfection".* (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006. Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 213). Sri Aurobindo explains that besides this Self there is the Spiritual Self. This Self is neither the psychic being nor the higher mind but a cosmic consciousness which is outside our physical body. *"For the highest spiritual Self is not even behind our personality and bodily existence but is above it and altogether exceeds it. The highest of the inner centers is in the head, just as the deepest is the heart; but the*

centre which opens directly to the Self is above the head, altogether outside the physical body, in what is called the subtle body Sukhma Sarira” (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006. Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 213/214).

Sri Aurobindo explains that this spiritual Self has two aspects. One of them results in peace, freedom and silence and it has a static feature. The other is dynamic and is experienced as a cosmic Self or Spirit which not only supports but originates and contains the whole cosmic action. This dynamic aspect brings divine Peace, Power, Light, Knowledge and Bliss into the being. Also this process does not have a fixed sequence. *“With some there is first an opening which reveals to them a vast infinite Silence, Force, Light or Bliss above them and afterwards either they ascend to that or these things begin to descend into the lower nature. With others there is either the descent, first into the head, then down to the heart level, then to the navel and below and through the whole body, or else an inexplicable opening—without any sense of descent- of peace, light, wideness or power, or else a horizontal opening into the cosmic consciousness or in a suddenly widened mind an outburst of knowledge” (Sri Aurobindo 1993, fifth impression, 2006. Integral Yoga chapter 3, p. 216).*

4.1 Using Intuition

In the mainstream of entrepreneurship literature different types of intuition have been studied, mainly in the context of information processing while in philosophical literature intuition has been related to knowledge in a wider sense. However, there is not much known about the processing of this broader knowledge. There are two practical ways of bringing the concept of intuition into entrepreneurship where it has a convergent or divergent role of information processing. The first is a coping style to manage external stimuli for example in addressing the VUCA problem of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. The second one is a core training part in the process of entrepreneurship so that it works as an internal resource in all entrepreneurial processes. Intuition is then a key competence in entrepreneurship in which students can be trained. Coursework related to entrepreneurship should take intuition into account. Educators and students should be aware of the role of intuition. This can be done in the following ways:

- (1) Address this topic in courses by reflecting on the students’ own intuitive power;
- (2) Ask students to explore this concept in existing businesses which may result in a case study;
- (3) Ask entrepreneurs who acknowledge the role of intuition to share their view amongst students;
- (4) Institutionalize and integrate practical tools to elicit intuitive power in every course related to entrepreneurship.

For spiritual intuition several spiritual practices help one to open only to higher consciousness, the domain of intuition, but also to grasp it in the purest and most lucid form (Nandram 2016).

5 Conclusion

We can conclude that intuition is a function of consciousness, which goes beyond the ordinary senses and mental mind, which does not have a logic sequence, which has multiple sources, and which is connected to our intellect and emotions. Future research should make the distinction between the several types of knowledge by including the sources of intuition. Just using the label intuition for all sorts of intuition is not helping in gaining insights how to enrich entrepreneurship with this topic. Another challenge is that intuition takes place in the subjective realm of our existence which can be approached by more qualitative research designs using first person approaches. How does spiritual intuition help in navigating VUCA? One can imagine that intuition works in a non-linear way.

We can suggest that all intuitions (those as convergent and divergent forms) are coming from the lower levels of mind, which can be labeled as “manas” while spiritual intuition comes from higher consciousness. Spiritual intuition can be seen as something integrative and transcending convergence and divergence of information. It integrates the lower level intuitions that are coming from manas with higher levels of intuition. The higher level intuition illumines the lower level intuitions in such a way that it brings sharp clarity in all types of decision making processes. The more a person perceives a high level of a VUCA context the more the need towards convergence in the information processing. Those with a higher ability towards divergence of information are more able to cope with a VUCA context. The more a person is able to integrate perspectives to using intuition the more he sees VUCA as opportunity rather than a weakness or a threat. In applying spiritual intuition there is no such thing perceived as a VUCA context.

Sharpening the process of getting access to one’s intuition is an important step in entrepreneurship context. The purer the consciousness level, the easier it is to access spiritual intuition. Spiritual practices could enhance this access to intuition and its validation when using it and opens ways to see VUCA as an opportunity.

Reflective Questions

1. In what characteristics are the types of intuitions different?
2. In what characteristics are the types of intuition similar?
3. Which type of intuition do you use and in what situations?
4. How does each type impact your perception of VUCA problems?
5. Reflect on the process of gaining true knowledge through awakening spiritual intuition.
6. How does intuition work in you when taking decisions at the workplace?

References

- Baldacchino, L., Ucbasaran, D., Cabantous, L., & Lockett, A. (2015). Entrepreneurship research on intuition: A critical analysis and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*.
- Blume, B. D., & Covin, J. G. (2011). Attributions to intuition in the venture founding process: Do entrepreneurs actually use intuition or just say that they do? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(1), 137–151.
- Bunge, M. A. (1962). *Intuition and science*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Crossan, M. M., Lane, H. W., & White, R. E. (1999). An organizational learning framework: From intuition to institution. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(3), 522–537.
- Dane, E., & Pratt, M. G. (2007). Exploring intuition and its role in managerial decision making. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(1), 33–54.
- Dane, E., & Pratt, M. G. (2009). Conceptualizing and measuring intuition: A review of recent trends. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 24, 1–40.
- Dutta, D. K., & Crossan, M. M. (2005). The nature of entrepreneurial opportunities: Understanding the process using the 4I organizational learning framework. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 29(4), 425–449.
- Greene, J., & Haidt, J. (2002). How (and where) does moral judgment work? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 6(12), 517–523.
- Haidt, J. (2007). The new synthesis in moral psychology. *Science*, 316(5827), 998–1002.
- Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: Mapping bounded rationality. *American Psychologist*, 58(9), 697.
- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. Macmillan.
- Miller, C. C., & Ireland, R. D. (2005). Intuition in strategic decision making: Friend or foe in the fast-paced 21st century? *The Academy of Management Executive*, 19(1), 19–30.
- Mitchell, J. R., Friga, P. N., & Mitchell, R. K. (2005). Untangling the intuition mess: Intuition as a construct in entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 29(6), 653–679.
- Nandram, S. S. (2016). How do spirituality, intuition and entrepreneurship go together? *Philosophy of Management*, 15(1), 65–82.
- Noddings, N., & Shore, P. J. (1984). *Awakening the inner eye. Intuition in education*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.
- Norlyk, H. E., Schmidt-Wilk, J., & Heaton, D. P. (2009). Spiritual dimensions of entrepreneurship in transcendental meditation and TM Siddhi program practitioners. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 6, 195–208.
- Sadler-Smith, E., & Shefy, E. (2004). The intuitive executive: Understanding and applying ‘gut feel’ in decision-making. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 18(4), 76–91.
- Simon, H. A. (1987). Making management decisions: The role of intuition and emotion. *The Academy of Management Executive* (1987–1989), 57–64.
- Simon, H. A. (1996). *The sciences of the artificial* (Vol. 136). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Sri Aurobindo, G. (1993). *The integral Yoga: Sri Aurobindo's teaching and method of practice*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
- Sri Aurobindo, G. (2006a). *Synthesis of Yoga, Chapter XX, Intuitive mind, edition from 2006b*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press.
- Sri Aurobindo, G. (2006b). *Life divine, Book 1, chapter 8: The methods of vedantic knowledge* (7th ed.). Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department.
- Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science*, 185(4157), 1124–1131.
- Vaughan, F. E. (1979). *Awakening intuition*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press.
- Yogi, M. M. (1986). *Life supported by natural law*. Fairfield, IA: Maharishi international University Press.

- Guenther, H. V. (1958). The levels of understanding in Buddhism. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 19–28.
- Hayashi, A. M. (2001). When to trust your gut. *Harvard Business Review*, 79(2), 59–65.

Sharda S. Nandram is Professor of Entrepreneurship and Spirituality at Nyenrode Business Universiteit, The Netherlands. She has cofounded Praan Group under which she utilizes her three decades of rich consulting experience through research in organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. She is the Founder of concepts of Integrating Simplification and Integrative Intelligence. She is well travelled with diverse cross-cultural experience through consulting, research and teaching engagements across Europe (Dutch resident), South America (Surinamese born), North America, Asia (Indian origin). She has two bachelors and two masters' degrees to her credit. One in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Amsterdam and the other in General Economics at the University of Amsterdam. She did her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the Vrije University of Amsterdam. She is a widely published researcher and an internationally acclaimed Author. Her popular published books include *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland* (2015, Springer), *The Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Essence of Entrepreneurship Through Personal Stories* (2006, Springer), *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (2010, Springer). Amidst well spread professional commitments, she equally enjoys taking care of her family—her Dutch husband and two kids (1997- and 2001-).

Puneet K. Bindlish is a consultant and an academic working in the area of Integrative Intelligence for organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. He is the Co-Founder of the concept of Integrative Intelligence at Praan Group. A widely published researcher and author, with over 15 years of rich consulting and international entrepreneurial experience across Healthcare, Telecom, Technology, Banking and Insurance, Education, Sports, Public Government sectors. Well travelled with diverse cross-cultural exposure through consulting, entrepreneurship, research and teaching engagements across Europe, North America, Asia (Indian citizen). He completed his under graduate engineering studies from prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU). He pursued his doctoral research as part of Fellow of Management, Organizational Behavior from MDI-Gurgaon.

Integrativeness Through Pursuing Integrative Intelligence as the Way Forward

Puneet K. Bindlish, Sharda S. Nandram, and Ankur Joshi

1 Introduction

To manage the VUCA issues we have introduced three pillars of Integrative Self-Management: *Swadharma*, *Swavalamban* and *Swaraaj*. The manifestation of these pillars in leadership and entrepreneurship has been expressed in previous chapters. To position each chapter in the four parts of the book we have analyzed which pillar has been dominantly represented in each of the chapters. Therefore the content in some chapters could be related to more than one pillar. However, the dominant one has been chosen to categorize them under respective sections (pillars). The first pillar, *Swadharma* is required to follow one's duties led by an intrinsic guidance which is infused by our inner sources in order to make a righteous contribution in navigating VUCA in the context of management. When following *Swadharma*, one needs several kinds of resources which require the skill of Self-Reliance or *Swavalamban*. To follow both *Swadharma* and *Swavalamban* in whatever management context, one needs to feel aligned with his or her own purpose in life which subsequently will lead to the experience of meaningful fulfilment of life purposes from a state of Self-Freedom i.e. *Swaraaj*. Each human being is seeking a higher purpose based on their consciousness about life. This search for connection to the higher consciousness is expressed in several intensities throughout one's life. This

P.K. Bindlish

Praan Group, Bovenpolderweg 1, 1165 LH, Halfweg, The Netherlands

S.S. Nandram

Praan Group, Halfweg, The Netherlands

Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

A. Joshi (✉)

Faculty of Management Studies—WISDOM, Banasthali Vidyapith, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

e-mail: ankurjoshi87@gmail.com

higher purpose brings the sustainable Self-Freedom in oneself. Several spiritual techniques and methodologies can be followed to refine this process of deriving ones purpose in life. The common pursuit for these ultimate purposes can be clearly seen as harmony or continuous happiness. How to formulate the message to convey this purpose in daily life is an important process in development. One gains this experience as a researcher, employee, manager or entrepreneur. In the conclusion section, chapters have been recognized as per author's explicit intentionality for an integrative perspective towards diverse dimensions of the phenomenon or the study mentioned. Additionally in this last section, a few examples and approaches have been provided to introduce the Integrativeness of the three pillars. Integrating all three pillars leads to unique approaches which can be further guided by intuition in its pure form. Therefore understanding intuition is an important process to comprehending how Self Management can create an anchor in a person's life. There are some issues in the conventional dominant approaches in management: lack of adequate conviction on the apriori objective to be integrative, limited scope of reality or the context, lack of appreciation for a need for holistic attainment of fundamental goals and ways of harmonizing these goals at various levels—individual, team, organization and industry.

However, there is still a tendency to maintain life purposes separate for private and professional (workplace). This does not support a smooth navigation in an environment under VUCA like contextual factors. In management research during the past few decades, scholars have put effort in addressing how workplaces can encourage employees, leaders and entrepreneurs to bring their 'whole being' to work and avoiding the unnatural split of a persons actions between their private and professional lives. We support a holistic attainment which refers to materialistic as well as spiritual goals or in other words—means for prosperity as well as means for emancipation or attaining higher consciousness. All authors through explicit and tacit approaches articulated the need for holistic perspectives to the reality in its understanding and actions related to that understanding. In Part-4, the authors highlight the importance of an integrative self. Various observers with individual feelings and contexts have different perspectives of VUCA. A clear understanding requires a holistic approach. There is a strong possibility that these calls for holistic and integrative approach, may be seen as same. At this point, it would be beneficial to define and clarify the difference between "holistic" and "integrative".

Ontologically, "*Holistic*" is understanding the nature of any object or phenomenon *from all possible perspectives* (across space, time, place, feeling) and *for all possible purposes* (axiological concerning values and ethics, epistemological concerning validity of ways of knowing, praxeological dealing with ways of actions related with/for that object). VUCA is perceived in various places and with different feelings. A clear understanding of it requires a holistic approach. A discussion using the concept of *worldview* with a six question framework brings holistic understanding of the object under discussion: What is? From where? Heading where? What is true/false? What is right/wrong? What/How should we do things? Philosophically, this identifies an ontology (an understanding of a phenomenon) that encompasses *Explanation, Etiology, Futurology, Epistemology, Axiology* and

Praxeology of the phenomenon. A very simple example of being holistic could be—considering the start of a business by analyzing the phenomenon for its nature and the characteristics. Then considering the process to reach that phenomenon through experiencing the factors that led to starting a business. Further, examining the actors behind the process of bringing the phenomenon into practice i.e. the entrepreneur and his personality and his competences. If you consider all three of these perspectives you can talk about a holistic perception. We could also say that a focus on financial, social, cultural aspects of running a business is holistic as each is required. Or focusing on matter and spirit related to how leadership motivates employees is about a holistic approach.

Integrative can be defined as the intent with which all possible perspectives for any phenomenon by diverse observers, are aligned to create a coherent understanding among observers (or proponents) of those different perspectives about the same object without discarding any observation. We can also consider a multi-disciplinary approach as integrative. Each discipline has its own focus and exists in itself. Bringing together several of the disciplines, leads to the intention to respect everyone's uniqueness and which may result in better outcome—an integrative one.

Ontologically, these terms—"holistic" and "integrative" are not of the same category. Therefore, the two terms should not to be compared or used interchangeably. This brief explanation should reasonably clarify the two terms and their distinction, especially their non-comparability, for the purpose of this book.

2 Need for Integrativeness

The VUCA is observed in diverse proportions in various contexts. Each context may introduce an overwhelming number of paradigms for understanding the changing context, then struggle with the problems that are observed with that understanding. This makes it extremely difficult for a leader or an entrepreneur in organizations to make choices among these possible paradigms. Selecting between them can occur in three distinct ways:

- A. *Same Paradigms Again*: One may still be tempted to put the same old wine in the new bottle. This would essentially refer to going through the same paradigm again as the inertia in the dominant worldview would support the status quo. This would lead to approaching any problem with the same consciousness that created it.

"No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.—Einstein"

Any perspective or worldview could be considered adequate if it can provide satisfactory answers to fundamental questions about any phenomenon in focus. Question like: What is (Explanation); Where it came from? (Etiology); Where it is heading? (Futurology); How to know? (Epistemology); What is right or wrong? (Axiology); and How things related to the phenomenon should be done? (Praxeology). If any of the elements are missing, the situation eventually reflects

characteristics of VUCA at various levels. If we follow the same existing paradigm, it may not lead to answers. We need to ask the questions to open up toward new directions for the solution. Therefore, if we apply the same paradigm again with inadequate answers to one or more worldview questions, then it is least likely to lead us to a solution. This approach may not be holistic because it potentially does not consider all perspectives or purposes.

- B. *Integration of Paradigms*: A moderate approach could also be taken by assembling or proportionately mixing all methods giving appropriate weightages to conventional methodologies (in some cases, referred to as synthetic or democratic unity). This book refers to this approach as “integration of paradigms” based approach. It is similar to a chemical mixture which retains the properties of its constituents. Here, this integration retains the fundamental shortcomings, worldview limitations and consciousness of those paradigms. The fundamental issues in the paradigms go unaddressed. To be able to harmonize approaches to the VUCA world, making sense of this complex diversity of paradigms, is the most important aspect. These diversities emanate from worldviews at the most deepest level. An approach of synthetic integration of paradigms may also lead to perceptual errors. This is because actors may view the perceptual units quite differently creating a fundamental attribution error. Here this approach may include all perspectives but may not necessarily include all purposes, therefore, it does not qualify to be holistic.

The observer invariably underestimates the degree to which a person’s behavior reflects situational demands, potentially influencing actors’ actions more closely toward their personality. Managing diversity of worldviews among actors is one of the most fundamental issue to be addressed through a different approach. Researchers have observed that the synthesized worldview, in its attempt to bridge various worldviews, brings compromise between different practices emanating from those worldviews. This compromise occurs more commonly at the systemic or framework level and opens up more fault lines than integrating the realities. The situation often gets out of hand and intensifies the VUCA characteristics.

Occasionally, some of the paradigms are not synthesizable and perhaps, not to be integrated due to natural differences. For example, like between linear and non-linear worldviews and between cause-effect and effect-cause syllogisms (retrospective understanding of causation i.e. effort first, then inference of cause). It is like mixing warm milk and yogurt when preparing a recipe. Any integration of above approaches, even if applied by force, would be synthetic in nature and not sustainable. In this case, it may not even be possible, no matter how hard we try. Therefore, the paradigm leading to approaches of deduction of elements and conclusion, would not lead to resolution of problems.

Everyone is appearing in the examination called life. Many try to copy each other without knowing that God has given each of us a different question chapter.

- C. *Integrative Paradigm*: The schismatic cognitive framework viewing dichotomy in the way entities are related to each other in reality, may not help. Clearly, as

discussed above, artificial or synthetic integration or unification of worldviews is not the right direction, as it sacrifices the indigenous nature of reality apart from unaddressed fundamental issues. The sacrificed portion is lost or in other words “*digested*” by the dominant paradigm. Therefore, an integrative research paradigm to address VUCA would be worth exploring and may ask for contemplations on fundamental aspects, thought experiments (includes intuition and dreaming), and indigenous explorations. It may also involve a departure from a typical behaviorist’s questionnaire (perceptions) style and be leading more towards open ended observational interview approaches (realistic), which in practice, is more experiencing than interviewing. This means moving from the paradigm of figuring solutions based on statistical data, to a paradigm of experiencing unique narratives to get inspired. This approach has an expressed intention behind holistic attainment to develop a coherent view without discarding any perspective.

3 Integrative Paradigm

We all are manufactured to fit each other; it's just that we face through wrong sides.

Different from the universalistic approach, an integrative paradigm focuses on integral (not synthetic) unity without the nomothetic perspective of claiming generalizations at the manifest level. A typical process of knowing any phenomenon involves two aspects—objective of knowledge and the knowledge trinity (subject matter or the knowable object, the knower and the knowledge itself). Different paradigms differ in their approach to handle these fundamental aspects. They differ either in definition or in adequacy. Apart from that, there may be total blind spots. For example, the knowledge process has an apriori conviction about the objective and object (termed as *nischaya* in Indian epistemology). In an integrative paradigm, this conviction of eventually integrating diverse perspectives has to be there. As paradigms like postmodernism can end up being so schismatic that the knowledge focus becomes mainly on “*oppressed vs oppressor*” pair, these paradigms may result in creating unnecessary fault lines in the organization (or society). Further, the objective has to be chosen in order to cover the holistic dimensions for the outcomes of the knowledge process—material as well as spiritual, righteousness, means of prosperity, worldly desires and emancipation towards higher consciousness. Each process is expected to be clear regarding the objective in this manner. Further, there may be curiosities and doubts or concerns. Presently, only the concerns are primarily focused and being presented or disguised also as curiosities. This distinction between curiosities and concerns is important, as the process of their handling is different. Curiosities lead us to higher consciousness through more knowledge. Concerns are doubts, which on settling, lead us to a higher conviction on action. Concerns are mostly at manifest material level.

In an integrative paradigm, a thesis is arrived at after removing doubts by examining the applicability of proper arguments in two categories—applicable everywhere and applicable in a particular context. Subsequently, the thesis goes

through the process of an integrative review or philosophical reconciliation process. The thesis is viewed from various perspectives and objections are removed in a manner that all have a common understanding of the knowable object or phenomenon in at least the abstract level. This process of reconciliation may require a process of *conciliation* (misinterpreted as “debate” or “defense”). This is a process that aims at arriving at an acceptable understanding of the description of object or reality. This process has three components—one’s position, reason and syllogism or evidence. This dialogue of *conciliation* has two sides—objections (a study of all possible objections to one’s knowledge of the object) and one’s clarification for rejection of objections. If a paradigm is able to integrate these aspects, then it can be called Integrative Paradigm. All purposes and perspectives are brought together to arrive at a coherent understanding and subsequent framework of action. In the absence of such a holistic and an integrative paradigm, the contextual factors like VUCA are perceived to be more intense.

In the next sections we present an example of an integrative philosophy, which draws from Indian philosophy. This sample integrative philosophy provides five features to examine the reality or phenomenon. These features, like in any integrative paradigm, can serve as guiding principles when it comes to epistemology, futurology, axiology, praxeology of diverse worldviews that are being integrated.

3.1 Integral Unity

Fundamentally, the truth is one. However, wise or knowledgeable people may know or say it differently. This suggests that no observation is invalid, instead there is just a difference in perspectives with which reality is seen. Therefore this would lead to an approach which understands the need to have “Integral Unity” (contrasted with synthetic unity) and comfort with diverse manifestations. This guides the perspective (What is-question) of actor or researcher or consultant or entrepreneur, manager or employee.

॥एकं सत् विप्र बहुदा वदन्ति॥

सत्य एक है, विप्रजन उसे बहु प्रकार से कहते हैं ।

There is one truth, Wisemen speak that in many ways.

3.2 Holistic Attainment Through Righteousness

Here righteousness is that which ensures attainment of worldly as well as higher goals with meaningfulness. In other words, holistic attainment of four life goals—righteousness, means for prosperity, worldly or material desires, and emancipation or liberation, This guides the purpose (Why-question and For what-question) of actions.

अथातो धर्मं व्याख्यास्यामः ।१। यतो-अभ्युदय निःश्रेयससिद्धि स धर्मः ।२। (वैशेषिक दर्शन)

अब धर्म की व्याख्या की जा रही है ।१। धर्म वह है जिससे अभ्युदय (यथार्थ कल्याण) व निःश्रेयस (परमार्थ कल्याण) की सिद्धि होती है ।

Defining Dharma, "Dharma" is that which ensures attainment of abhyudaya—worldly goals or nishreyasa- liberation or higher goals around meaningfulness.

देखि बुद्धि बल निपुन कपि कहेहु जानकी जाहु ।

रघुपति घरन हृदय धरि तात मधुर फल खाहु ।।

In Ashok Vatika when Hanuman ji expresses desire to taste the fruits in the garden, Mata Sita finds that he is intellectually sound and physically capable, and therefore advises him to offer prayers to the Bhagwan and his feet, concentrate on Bhagwan in the heart and then go after the fruits. (Ramcharitmanas Sundarkand Doha 17)

This is the foundation for materialistic growth in Bharatiya civilization, where materialistic growth is not seen as hindrance in moksh, if it is done with good intentions and Bhagwan in heart, thereby on foundations of ethics, morality and spirituality.

3.3 Integral View on Action Through Embodied Knowing

Integral view on action refers to a state in which the doer is undertaking the duties by abandoning all attachments and feeling equipped with skills to cope with both success or failure. In other words, an attempt is being made to achieve holistic attainment by performing self-action with such an equipoised state—unattached with fruits and being equanimous in success and failure. Such an action requires an amalgamation of knowledge, karma—action and devotion. This guides the approach (How-question) of action.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्ग त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

सिद्धयसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योगउच्यते ।२-४८ ।

योग में स्थित हो फल से अनासक्त, सिद्धि और असिद्धि में स्थितप्रज्ञ रह स्वकर्म से समत्व की प्राप्ति। Undertaking the duties, abandoning all attachments, equipoised in success or failure. Such equanimity is termed to be yoga.

3.4 Doing Without Doer-ship

Similar to detached action, doing without doer-ship is an important aspect of Integrativeness. It refers to the state of not getting associated with the act being done and not considering oneself as an actor. There is no exception; all activities are being enacted by the senses of the material nature. The person without such a consciousness (the unrealized), is deluded by false identification that he is the body, and thus thinks that he is the doer.

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।

अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ।३-२७ ।

वास्तव में सम्पूर्ण कर्म सब प्रकार से प्रकृति के गुणों द्वारा किये जाते हैं तो भी जिसका अंतःकरण अहंकार से मोहित हो रहा है, ऐसा अज्ञानी “मैं करता हूँ” ऐसा मानता है।

All activities are being enacted by the senses of the material nature without exception; but the unrealized, deluded by false identification of being the body, thus thinks: “I am the doer.” (Bhagavad Gita 3.27)

3.5 We Are All Connected

Connection guides the purpose (for Whom-question and for What-questions) of action. This translates to higher comfort with chaos and an epistemological appreciation towards indigenous non-translatable knowledge (part of the indigenous knowledge which cannot be translated).

॥तत् त्वम् असि॥

तुम वह हो। You are that.

ॐ सह नाववतु ।सह नौ भुनक्तु ।सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

Om! May we be protected together; may we be nourished together; May we work together with great energy, May our study be vigorous and effective; May we not mutually hate or dispute.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चित् दुःख भागभवेत्॥

May all be happy. May all remain free from disabilities. May all see auspicious things. May none suffer sorrows.

4 Conclusion

Many authors, who support an integrative mindset towards the reality, see VUCA, a phenomenon highly relative to the observer’s perception of the context. If we expand that view, we can arrive at a conclusion that if the observer’s perception is the main factor prior to VUCA, then observer’s intelligence to integrate is a good starting point to navigate for VUCA management. This comes before we even measure VUCA or qualify it as a problem or an opportunity. We label this as Integrative Intelligence, a type of intelligence where a person is able to integrate all purposes and perspectives in a given context with an apriori intention to move towards a coherent understanding about that context.

Integrative Intelligence is based on the five principles as discussed in the previous sections: integral unity; doing without doer-ship; the notion that we are all connected; holistic attainment of goals and an integral view on actions which are detached from fruits. By increasing such intelligence, there is more comfort with contextual volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). Or in other words, a person will perceive and experience with a lower intensity of VUCA as compared to the case with less or a lack of Integrative Intelligence. Perhaps for some observers, VUCA may actually be observed as a source of strength and a

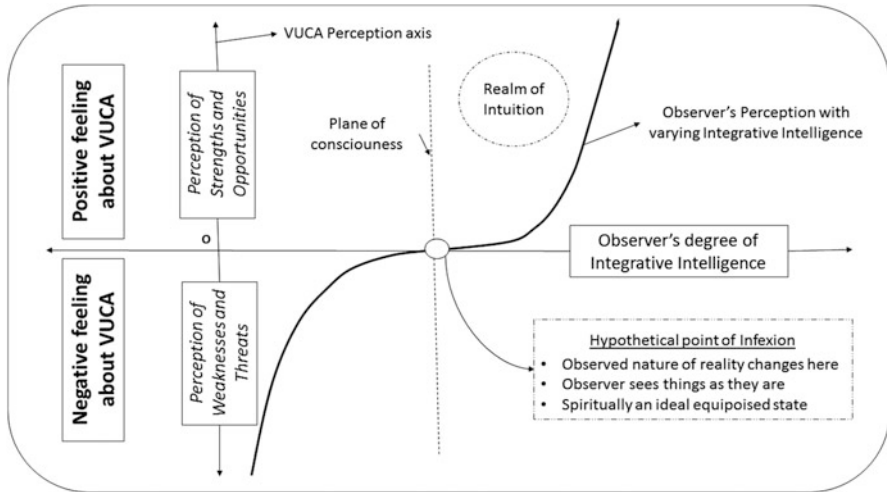


Fig. 1 Integrative intelligence and experience of VUCA

treasure of opportunities rather than a source of weaknesses and threats. We can show this relationship between Integrative Intelligence and perception of VUCA factors as follows (see Fig. 1):

This gives us a direction for further action with better focus than before. The future work can be inspired by conceptualizing this concept of Integrative Intelligence and its possible applications in addressing the issues VUCA raises. We sincerely hope that this book inspires academicians and practitioners alike to devise more integrative paradigms and convert VUCA into an opportunity rather than an issue.

Puneet K. Bindlish is a consultant and an academic working in the area of Integrative Intelligence for organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. He is the Co-Founder of the concept of Integrative Intelligence at Praan Group. A widely published researcher and author, with over 15 years of rich consulting and international entrepreneurial experience across Healthcare, Telecom, Technology, Banking and Insurance, Education, Sports, Public Government sectors. Well travelled with diverse cross-cultural exposure through consulting, entrepreneurship, research and teaching engagements across Europe, North America, Asia (Indian citizen). He completed his under graduate engineering studies from prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU). He pursued his doctoral research as part of Fellow of Management, Organizational Behavior from MDI-Gurgaon.

Sharda S. Nandram is Professor of Entrepreneurship and Spirituality at Nyenrode Business Universiteit, The Netherlands. She has cofounded Praan Group under which she utilizes her three decades of rich consulting experience through research in organizations globally facing VUCA challenges. She is the Founder of concepts of Integrating Simplification and Integrative Intelligence. She is well travelled with diverse cross-cultural experience through consulting, research and teaching engagements across Europe (Dutch resident), South America (Surinamese born), North America, Asia (Indian origin). She has two bachelors and two masters' degrees to her credit. One in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Amsterdam and the other in General Economics at the University of Amsterdam. She did her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the Vrije University of Amsterdam. She is a widely published researcher and an internationally

acclaimed Author. Her popular published books include *Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification: Learning from Buurtzorg Nederland* (2015, Springer), *The Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Essence of Entrepreneurship Through Personal Stories* (2006, Springer), *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (2010, Springer). Amidst well spread professional commitments, she equally enjoys taking care of her family—her Dutch husband and two kids (1997- and 2001-).

Ankur Joshi is Assistant Professor and Project Coordinator, at Faculty of Management Studies, Banasthali Vidyapith, BharatBharat (India). Researcher in areas of Indigenous education system, Public Policy and Governance, Social Entrepreneurship, and Indigenous Research Methodology. Studied Content, Pedagogy, and Outcomes of Gurukul System of Education in Doctoral thesis with an aim to inform policy towards improvement of quality in education.

Index

A

Aadhyaatmopanishad, 221
Abhyasa, 278–280
Action research, 131, 132, 144, 204
Adaptability, 119, 168, 194
Ahankaar, 214
Akshyupanishad, 220
American oligarchy, 68
Ancient traditions, 263
Ancient wisdom, 13
Anger, 35–36
Antahkaran Chatushtaya, 213, 227
Anthropology, 31, 32
Aristocratic leadership style, 16
Art of Living, 173
Arthashastra, 4
Ashtaavakra Geeta, 211
Attunement, 267, 272, 276, 277, 279, 280
Aurobindo, Sri, 312–316
Authenticity, 152, 183, 236, 258
Axiology, 322, 323

B

Behavioral, 11
Bhagavad Gita, 137, 172, 179, 211, 215, 218, 219, 221–224, 294, 298, 328
Bhagwad Chetana, 290
Bhakti Yoga, 213, 216
Bhartrihari Neeti Shatak, 220
Bhartrihari Shatak, 212
Big Data, 10
Blagging, 93
Bonded Labour, 141–142
Boundary critique, 9, 131, 132, 136–137, 139, 144, 145
Brahma Kumaris, 175

Brahmabindu Upanishad, 217
Brahmakumari Shivani, 179
Brahmi Chetana, 290
Buddhism, 7, 28, 29, 137, 191, 197, 198
Bureaucratic rationality, 23, 24
Business ethics, 7, 22, 24, 66, 145
Buurtzorg, 12, 263–283

C

Catholic Order of the Trappists, 16
Chanakya Sutra, 212
Change managerialism, 46, 56
Christian, 16, 28, 31, 32, 34, 41, 76, 92–96, 156, 258, 259
Chrysostom, 7, 28–39, 41, 42
Church, 7, 125, 252, 264
Citizenship, 22, 24, 115, 224
Collaborative innovation, 5
Collective consciousness, 5, 133
Common-Sensing Principle, 269
Communis opinio, 23, 24
Community-based organisations, 141
Competitiveness, 123, 124, 126, 166, 188
Consciousness, 8, 10, 29, 67, 83, 86, 133, 184–187, 191, 195, 197, 216–218, 226, 235–237, 289, 290, 292, 301, 304, 311–317, 321–325, 327
Consequentialism, 138
Consolatio, 15
Consumerism, 47, 68, 75, 230, 256
Cosmic consciousness, 290, 315
Cost-benefit analysis, 15, 17
Craftsmanship, 267, 272–277, 279, 280
Creative intuition, 310, 311
Critical Heuristics Systems, 136
Critical thinking, 59, 112

D

Dalai Lama, 69
das Geheimnis, 157
 Democracy, 22, 23, 68, 109, 110
 Democratic leadership style, 17
 Dharma, 176, 218, 293, 294, 327
 Digitization, 4
Dilatatio, 15
 Distributed leadership, 5
 Dreaming consciousness, 290

E

Educational system, 127
 Ekaatmaanubhooti, 213, 227
 Emancipatory AR, 133
 Emotional intelligence, 16, 189
 Employee satisfaction, 12, 270, 273
 Emptiness, 52, 54–56, 235–238
 Enlightenment, 12, 192
 Entrepreneurial intuition, 13, 310
 Entrepreneurial life cycle, 13
 Entrepreneurship, 3, 6, 13, 23, 264, 307, 308, 311, 312, 316, 317, 321
 Epistemology, 322, 323
 Ethical management, 264
 Etiology, 322, 323
 Existential, 82, 115, 137, 138, 152, 163, 164, 232, 236
 Expert intuition, 13, 272, 310, 311, 313

F

Family structure, 122, 123, 125, 127
 Francis Bacon, 150
 Frugality, 10, 70, 150
 Futurology, 322, 323

G

Garbha Upanishad, 217
 Gelassenheit, 156, 230, 241
 Genocide, 65
Gestell, 155, 156
 Global competitiveness, 9
 Globalization, 5, 68–69, 72–74, 81, 177
 God consciousness, 290
 Gospel of Mathieu, 28
 Greed, 36–38, 71, 74, 75, 155, 162, 218
 Grounded theory, 12, 265
 Gyaana Yoga, 213

H

Hannah Arendt, 7, 17–20, 24
 Heidegger, 9, 17, 149–151, 153, 155–157, 185
 Hermeneutic approach, 7
 Hermeneutics, 30, 189, 236
Hesychia, 7, 29, 30, 36, 41, 42
 Higher Purpose, 272, 275, 276, 278
 Hinduism, 137, 138
Holistic, 5, 12, 180, 263, 264, 270–272, 278, 279, 281, 282, 291, 301, 303, 307, 322–328
 Human Capital, 179
 Human values, 5, 179, 264
 Humanism, 151, 153–155, 172

I

Ignatius of Loyola, 15
 Immanuel Kant, 17
 In-betweenness, 238
 Incarnationalism, 237
 Indian Independence Movement, 139–141
 Indian philosophy, 132, 137, 144, 326
 Inner self, 298, 303
 Instrumental rationality, 49
 Integral Unity, 326
 Integrating simplification theory (IST), 12, 276–278, 280–282
 Integrative, 4–7, 12, 13, 29–31, 42, 149, 230–232, 234, 270, 279, 307–318, 322, 323, 325, 326, 328, 329
 Integrative Intelligence, 13, 321–329
 Integrative mindfulness, 7, 29
 Integrative Mindfulness Program, 7, 29
 Integrative paradigm, 6, 324–328
 Integrative perspective, 4, 232, 322
 Integrative-ness, 13
 Intellectual intuition, 13, 309
 Interconnectedness, 5, 10, 70, 150
 Interfaith, 8, 67, 76
 International Monetary Fund, 68
 Interpretivist, 88
 Intersectionality, 8, 81–84, 86, 88, 93, 95, 98–102
 Intrapreneurial Team Freedom, 272, 274, 276, 277, 279

J

Jagrati Chetana, 290
 Jainism, 137

Jaspers, 9, 17, 149–154, 156, 157
 Jewish, 17, 71, 87, 231, 259
 John Chrysostom, 7, 27–30
 Judging, 19

K

Kaama, 214
Karma, 9, 10, 131–145, 163, 168, 172, 210,
 219–222, 224, 327
 Karmayogi, 142–144
Karmic, 10, 137–139, 144, 163, 164, 167,
 168
 Karmic Leadership, 10, 161–168
 Kathaasaritsaagar, 212
 Kautilya, 4
Krodha, 214

L

Langar, 72
 Leadership development, 4
 Liberalization, 4
Lobha, 214

M

Mahabharata, 137, 138, 165, 211, 217
 Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 12, 172, 178, 179,
 289, 294
 Mahatma Gandhi, 139, 172
 Mahopanishad, 217, 220
 Management education, 8, 66, 67, 75–77, 82,
 209, 212
 Managerialism, 7, 45–61, 73
 Marriage, 124
 Mass production, 151, 152
 Massification, 151, 152, 154
 Mata Amritanandamayi, 179
 Materialistic, 67, 72, 263, 322, 327
Matsar, 214
 McDonaldization, 49, 52
 McMindfulness, 239
 Meditation, 137, 155, 172–175, 177–179, 197,
 204, 217, 222, 226, 264, 290
 Merleau-Ponty, 12, 230, 231, 234–240
 Metaphysics, 150, 237
 Mindfulness, 5, 7, 11, 28–42, 60, 66, 155,
 166, 194–205, 229, 239, 264, 270,
 276
Moha, 214
 Moral intuition, 13, 310
 Moral reasoning, 19, 22, 24, 295, 302
 Muslim, 16, 94, 140, 177, 259
 Mutual trust, 11

N

Narrative approach, 87, 89
Needing-Principle, 268
 Neo-nazism, 65
Nepsis, 7, 30, 39, 41, 42
 Nepsis Manager, 39–41
 Nishkaam Karma, 213, 221–223
 Notre-Dame de l'Atlas, 16

O

Organic-izations, 12, 231, 238–239
 Organisational development, 10, 184, 190, 191
 Organisational intelligence, 10, 184
 Organizational Behavior, 209, 210
 Organizational change, 7, 8, 45–48, 59, 60,
 111, 132, 145, 209, 265
 Organizational consciousness, 264
 Organizational culture, 4, 143, 209, 281
 Organizational narratives, 87

P

Paingal Upanishad, 216
 Parenthood, 125
 Parliament of the World's Religions, 8, 67
 Participating consciousness, 186
 Participatory action research, 131, 134–136
 Patanjali, 211, 217, 218, 226, 292
 Pater Familias, 7, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36–40,
 42
 Perception Ethics, 213, 224–226
 Phenomenology, 11, 230–234, 237, 242
 Pluralistic, 137, 230
 Polykleitos, 183
 Pope, 69, 74
 Post- traumatic stress disorder, 195
 Postmodern, 232, 236
 Practical AR, 133
 Pragmatic Will with ICT, 272, 273, 278
 Praxeology, 322, 323
 Praxis, 31, 133, 233, 234, 236, 256
 Presence, 22, 184, 188–190
 Presencing, 189, 191, 241
 Problem solving intuition, 13, 309–311
 Psychisitation, 314

Q

Quantum Tolerance, 187

R

Raamaayan, 220–222, 225
 Racism, 85, 95

- Rajas, 213, 294
 Ramakrishna Mission, 175
 Ramana Maharishi, 162
 Ramayana, 211
 Ratio, 15
 Rational Emotive Therapy, 178
 Reflexive sensemaking, 59, 60
 Relationship Ethics, 213
 Religio-spiritual leadership, 84
 Religious, 7, 9, 16, 22, 29, 69–74, 76, 77, 83, 84, 86, 87, 91, 96, 99, 121, 124, 125, 128, 162, 171, 174, 198, 231, 257, 264, 281, 315
 Religious context, 7
 Representative thinking, 7, 21–23
 Responsible leadership, 114
 Re-thinking Principle, 268
 Reverend Jessica Meade, 8, 83, 86, 90, 97
 Role of family, 121
- S**
 Samkhya, 211
 Sanskrit, 11, 209–227
 Sattwa, 213, 294
Satyagraha, 139
 Secular, 8, 17, 67, 69, 70, 82, 83, 101, 176, 230, 259
 Self-awareness, 315
 Self-determination, 126
 Self-development, 7, 210, 226, 227, 251
 Self-discipline, 187
 Self-esteem, 96, 126, 127, 214, 225, 250, 274
 Self-freedom, 4–6, 322
 Self-identity, 11, 47
 Self-image, 10, 185
 Self-interest, 10, 113, 184, 185
 Self-knowledge, 10, 178
 Self-management, 4–6, 11, 194, 209, 210, 241, 282, 321
 Self-monitoring, 40
 Self-reliance, 4, 5, 9, 112, 113, 117, 149, 321
 Self-righteousness, 4–7, 24, 40, 84–85, 87, 93, 94, 98–101, 310
 Sensemaking, 45–48, 56–60
Sensus communis, 20–22
 Sexism, 95
 Shukra Neeti, 212
 Shwetaashwataropnishad, 220
 Simplicity, 10, 12, 51, 52, 55, 70, 150, 201, 225, 251, 254–260, 268, 274, 276, 280
 Skandopnishad, 215
 Slavery, 141–142
 Sleeping consciousness, 290
 Sloterdijk, 9, 149–151, 153, 154, 157
 Smritis, 211
 Social Interface, 122
 Socialization, 9, 67, 84, 120–124, 128
 Spiritual climate, 281
 Spiritual culture, 180, 239
 Spiritual discernment, 7, 15–17, 22, 24
 Spiritual intuition, 13, 309, 311, 312, 317
 Spiritual leadership, 84, 281
 Spiritual Quotient, 179
 Spiritual traditions, 29, 70, 71, 229, 231, 256, 281, 311
 Spiritualism, 95, 180
 Spirituality, 8, 9, 11, 21, 22, 76, 77, 81–84, 86–88, 91, 92, 95–102, 109–117, 123–125, 128, 150, 156, 162, 171–177, 179, 180, 191, 212, 213, 230–234, 236, 238–240, 259, 264, 281, 297, 327
 Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, 173
 Sringeri, 179
 Stakeholder model, 22
 Story-telling, 89, 97, 98
 Subtle Craftsmanship, 276
 Sudarshan Kriya, 173, 178
Sushupti chetana, 290
 Sustainability, 5, 71, 116
Swadeshi, 140
 Swadharma, 4, 6–8, 12, 293–298, 303, 304, 321
 Swami Vivekananda, 172, 175
Swapna Chetana, 290
 Swaraaj, 4, 6, 10–12, 300–302, 321
 Swavalamban, 4, 6, 9–10, 12, 298–299, 303, 304
 Systemic intervention, 136
- T**
 Taittireeyopnishad, 220
 Tamas, 213, 294
 Tattwabodh, 211, 218, 221
 Technical AR, 133
 Theoria, 31
 Theory of judgment, 21
 Theory of justice, 138
 Tibhirine, 16
 Transcendence, 9, 149–157, 230, 234, 235, 237, 289, 290, 292
 Transcendental consciousness, 178, 290, 292, 293, 302
 Transcendental meditation, 12, 178, 289–304
 Transformational coaching, 264

- Transformational learning, 264
 Trauma, 11, 194–198, 200, 203, 205
 Trilangya Swami, 162
Turiyatit Chetana, 290
- U**
 Unity consciousness, 290
 Upanishads, 172, 180, 211, 292, 293, 298
 Utilitarianism, 20, 138
- V**
Vairagya, 278, 279
 Vaisheshik, 211, 221
 Vedic, 12, 172, 185, 289, 291–293, 298, 300, 301, 304, 312, 313
 Vedic civilization, 12
 Vidur Neeti, 211
 Vipassana Meditation, 172–175
 Virtuousness, 113, 184
 Vivek Choodaamani, 211, 217, 224, 225
 VUCA environment, 11, 46, 69, 74, 95, 99, 194
 VUCA world, 7, 8, 10–12, 27–43, 45, 46, 65–70, 73–77, 120, 123, 126, 128, 145, 164, 168, 173, 180, 193–205, 210, 212, 225, 226, 253, 256, 263–265, 280, 282, 309, 324
- W**
 Waking Consciousness, 290
 Well-being, 9, 28, 38, 85, 87, 99–100, 114, 125, 177, 179, 203, 204, 240, 264, 297
 Women leaders, 8, 101, 112
 Workplace spirituality, 82
 World Bank, 68, 70
 World Trade Organization, 68
- X**
 Xenophobia, 65, 85
- Y**
 Yog Sutra, 217, 218, 226
 Yoga Sutra, 211
 Yogvaashishtha, 211
- Z**
Zeitgeber Focus, 6, 276
 Zen, 184, 191, 192