



INTEGRATIVE LEADERSHIP: Innovating from ‘The Middle Space (TMS)’

“You need chaos in your soul to give birth to a dancing star”

Friedrich Nietzsche

by Gary Nelson



INTRODUCTION

When the times seem most uncertain and the path to the future unknown, individuals are in need of inspiration. Lacking it, they find themselves living in the *space between* the known and unknown - what the ancient Greeks called a place of chaos, disorder and uncertainty. Paradoxically, inspiration and innovation also emerge from this *middle space*, through a process of reflective and integrative thought, where the relationship between the Self within, and others without, takes form, is affirmed, and aligned (Siegel, 2010). At such times, however, our sense of connection may be frayed or lost, whereupon our existing leadership stance, value proposition and orientation to the world must be rethought. A new, integrative leadership stance then emerges to offer the inspiration we need (the word ‘inspire’ means to breathe life, new meaning and direction into our lives, families, and communities). Described here, it represents an emergent value proposition for our times, offering a concept, principles and tools to guide ‘how’ we can foster sustainable lives and social enterprises that balance the interests of people, planet, and performance. It does so by embracing an ethic of inclusive engagement, imagination, innovation, and shared accountability. It creates the individual and collective consciousness and will for transformative change (Narvarez, 2008 and Goleman, 2009).

LIVING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

We live in times, described by futurist, Bob Johansen (2009), as the VUCA world. Leaders must address the opportunities and challenges presented by the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of today’s natural, social and economic environments. Successful leadership is a measure of how leaders respond to this - the unknown - by ‘pausing’ to reflect on their purpose and interests, to connect better with the purposes and interests of others and the natural world, so that together they can reassert a measure of certainty, well-being and

environmental stewardship (O’Donohue, 2008). Successful leaders, to paraphrase Nietzsche, confront and embrace the sources of internal and external chaos and unpredictability that envelop them in periods of transition and change. They do so to bridge the gaps between their own intentions and behaviors, and the gaps between their intentions and the intentions of others. It is at these times that they birth their individual dancing star - their ‘leader within’, their purpose and will - to engage the leader, purpose and will within others for a collaborative, organic, self-governing, sustainable process of change (Senge, et. al. 2008 and Follett, 1924).



INTEGRATIVE LEADERS

Integrative leadership is the property of an evolving Self, system and the world. It is a natural phenomenon driven by dynamic tensions within and between individuals, their systems, and the environment. Integrative leaders engage the whole mind, systems and the environment turning the tensions to creative advantage. They do so by synthesizing the strengths of opposing perspectives. They 'close the circle' of learning through a process of experimentation and shared adaptation. In this creative process, integrative leaders forge new possibilities and results that are superior to what they could have secured on their own, which serve to regenerate and preserve the organic balance of life, with integrated social, economic and environmental systems for present and future generations (WCED, 1987; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Arthur, 2009; Goleman, 2009).

The exercise of integrative leadership, seen in this light, is an art. Its essence is innovation, grounded and shaped by intention, and informed by the sciences of complexity and chaos theory (Martin and Austen, 1999). It is a process and method that fosters sustainable change. As intention, it is purpose and results-driven. Intention informs design; design informs the art and method for creating a new architecture of change. As an art and change-method it speaks to 'how' we catalyze emergent, self-organizing and self-governing growth processes. It is 'how' we engage and transform ourselves and others. In a holistic process of engagement, imagination, innovation, and shared accountability, the leader musters her knowledge, courage and 'will' and the 'will' of others, for change. She models and teaches from a balanced theory of knowledge that includes values, evidence and intuition to inform actions and behaviors, and to grow the power necessary for sustainable and transformative change (Follett, 1924 and Sternberg, 1998). All impactful change is the function of individuals joining with others to achieve what they cannot achieve on their own. All sustainable system-change is the product of individuals, small groups, and network-centric adaptive learning processes.

TACKLING COMPLEX, ASYMMETRICAL CHALLENGES

A new social technology of integrative leadership is emerging to tackle complex challenges (Martin, 2008 and Arthur, 2009), referred to as

'asymmetrical problems' (Albert and Hayes, 2005 and Farmer, 2010). It is based on the much earlier work of Mary Parker Follett, 1924). Asymmetrical problems are characterized by risk, ambiguity, and under-engaged human assets. Such problems are vexing. They are what C West Churchman (1967) called 'wicked problems'. They are marked by volatility and uncertainty stemming from underlying complex interdependencies. They do not respond to simple, linear solutions. Solving one problem can create other problems unless interdependences are taken into account. Examples include conflicts that arise from natural and man-made disasters. They range from hurricane Katrina to the financial meltdown of 2008, and what is now known as the Great Recession. They include war, terrorism, and poverty.

Addressing these challenges through traditional methods, such as direct-aid interventions and other applications of power and authority, often lead to failure (eg military conflicts, and welfare and environmental degradation). Rather than ameliorating the problem, they often contribute to their seeming intractability (Ellerman, 2006; Moyo, 2009; Albert and Hayes, 2005). These failures are frequently viewed as the product of resistance or inadequacy on the part of those who are the subject of the interventions. In fact, many asymmetrical problems resist resolution due to a lack of openness to what are necessary and reciprocal changes in values, thoughts, and behaviors among all those directly involved in the change process itself. The *individual and collective will* of a people are not engaged adequately to co-design creative, sustainable and regenerative solutions. Just as asymmetries can lead to vicious circles, however, they can also contribute to the creation of virtuous circles of positive transformative change. An integrative process of engagement, reciprocity and mutual adaptation can spur the innovative and mutual solution-finding necessary to overcome complex challenges. Integrative leaders facilitate transformative changes by uncovering an intersection of purposes, fostering collaborative learning designs, and measuring their impact with a shared accountability for results.

A BLENDED VALUE PROPOSITION

Nearly one hundred years ago, an early leadership and management theorist, Mary Parker Follett, spoke and wrote persuasively about integrative leadership and management as a dynamic, creative experience for



addressing complex problems. She was working during another turbulent period, the 1920s, the run-up to the Great Depression, and another deep cycle of social and economic disorder and uncertainty. She was ahead of her time (Graham, 1995). In her prescient early book, *The Creative Experience* (1924), she defined integrative leadership and management as an organic, life-affirming, reflective, circular, creative learning process in which harmony and a shared purpose are continuously regenerated as new points of equilibrium through the integration of diverse ideas and experiences, whereby people overcome conflict through mutual 'purposing, thinking, and willing' (Follett, 1924).

An integrative notion of leadership and management is the product of what can be called a 'blended value proposition' (Emerson, 2000). The blending begins by bridging the split in our notions of the functions of leadership and management themselves. Conventional approaches to leadership and management identify individuals as possessing either a capacity for leadership or management, but not both. In reality, individuals possess the capacity and responsibility to lead and manage, think and experience, know and do. It is, as Follett (1924) noted, a dynamic, circular, adaptive learning process of *seeing the right thing to do and doing the thing right*.

To learn and live sustainably, we must close the gap between thinking and experiencing, ideas and actions, leadership and management, incorporating responsibility and consequences. Without doing so, we cannot effectively learn or adapt. From this blended value proposition, integrative leaders offer guidance that is visionary and inspirational as well as practical, and results-based. Integrative leaders couple creative ideas to actions, thinking and experiencing, mediated through self-governing feedback loops. It is expressed in a process of self-evaluation where one learns from one's results assessed against one's purpose at the individual and collective level.

Integrative leaders also draw from what Robert Sternberg (1998) calls a 'balanced theory of wisdom'. It is the wisdom to "maximize not just one's own or someone else's self-interest, but rather blend and balance various self-interests (intrapersonal) with the interests of others (interpersonal), both grounded in the context in which one lives (extra-personal), city, state, environment or even God".

Integrative leaders, guided by this wisdom, operate from a new DNA, a new set of social and cultural memes. Faced with complex challenges to which there are no ready solutions, they operate by a default not of command, control and compliance, but of engagement, learning and shared adaptation, in pursuit of enlightened short and long-term interests and possibilities.

FACILITATING THE CONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION

Our traditional understanding of leadership is informed by lessons from the classical sciences born of the Enlightenment with its linear and mechanistic models of change. Insights from these sciences foster change and innovation by 'taking things apart'. This conventional approach to leadership is driven by our analytic, differentiating intellect. It embraces a dualistic conception of the functions of leadership and management where a few individuals lead, and others, the majority, follow. It embraces a notion of self-interest that frequently places private interests at odds with each other, and at odds with our collective or public interests, including the welfare of the environment on which we all depend.

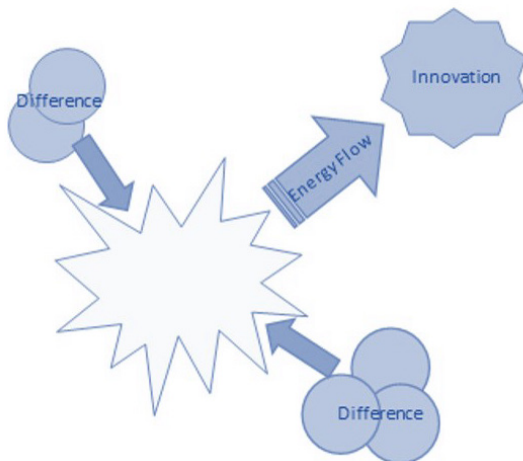
This analytic intellect, with which we are most familiar, is a reductionist thought process informed by our left-brain intelligence. Taking things apart, like the process of atomic fission, releases a tremendous amount of energy. This energy is used to create and test new and different technologies and methods to secure our well-being, from machines and medicines to individualism and democracy (Yudkowsky, 2005). This reductionism when taken to an extreme, however, contributes to a highly fragmented, dense, contentious, conflict-ridden world. It contributes to the creation of wicked, asymmetrical problems. It has contributed to an overly materialistic, individualistic, and disengaged citizenry.

In our emergent, local-global community, characterized as it is by highly categorical and specialized domains and disciplinary practices, we have fragmented our intelligence and our capacity for the collective wisdom (Brislin, 2009) we need to solve our wicked problems. We are now confronted with a challenge of making whole again what we have fragmented. Integrative leadership, an approach with which we are less familiar, is the social change technology of the 21st century. It is informed by the new sciences



of chaos and complexity theories which offer us a lens for understanding nature, and the nature of change, as a nonlinear, highly relational and creative process. Add findings from the neurosciences and we have an appreciation for the plasticity of 'reality', its emergent properties, and the possibilities for innovating and shaping our reality. Integrative leadership fosters innovation by 'putting things together' - diverse domains, sources of knowledge, relationships and fields of practice - in new combinations to create more sustainable social, economic and environmental practices (Senge, 2008). It catalyzes a push-pull, emergent, self-organizing process of change that is, itself, a response to complex underlying societal and natural forces (Arthur, 2009). It is like the integrating, atomic process of fusion which leads to the creation and release of a tremendous energy for change that is necessary to overcome past assumptions and practices, retaining and evolving a life-giving diversity, a diversity that is essential for sustainable change and abundance, measured in increases in social, environmental and spiritual, as well as financial and material, capital. The current mega trend of sustainable development is an outgrowth of an emergent, integrative process, fueled by an underlying entropy, disorder, and uncertainty within our current system and mindset. Its emergence signals an older order coming to an end.

Figure 1: Integration and Innovation



Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1996), in his book, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*, speaks to the integration of domains and fields of practice as 'boundary crossings', a process for creating flow and change. Such boundary crossings

or, in our terms, integrations, trigger dynamic, creative interactions within the existing system. The crossings are introduced to systems by individuals and clusters of individuals who bring novelty into a symbolic domain. This novelty is received as a challenge to the current culture, to the symbolic rules and tools for asserting order and stimulating change. The challenges (innovations) take hold when a growing field of multidimensional experts and citizens recognize, take up and integrate these innovations.

Crossings and integrations play out at the individual or micro-environmental level through resolutions of individual personal or professional challenges. They play out at the system or macro-environment level to address collective challenges and interests. Through the interplay between Self, others, and the system, the innovations take hold and spread throughout the social, cultural, and institutional context in which individuals and clusters of individuals operate.

AN INTEGRATIVE LEADERSHIP STANCE

I have described integrative leadership as an emergent, creative learning philosophy, process and technology in which integrative leaders tap different leadership capacities that lie within them and those with whom they collaborate. Many of these capacities have been previously conceptualized in keeping with our reductionist mindset as highly competitive, individualistic and separable talents. Every individual, in reality, possesses a range of such talents for inspirational, engaged, strategic, resilient and collaborative results-based leadership, exercising and contributing them by playing diverse and different roles as situations dictate. This does not mean that individuals demonstrate such talents in equal measure. Some individuals are more visionary and intuitive than others. Some are better able to see and describe in story an inspirational future, and a sense of purpose that resonates with others. Others possess real strength in focusing on, and tracking, the results of individuals and groups of individuals. Integrative leaders are relational: they lead from their strengths and tap the strengths of others to form a leadership team for change that possesses all the requisite talents. The leadership framework depicted below reflects a circular, scalable learning process that builds on these individual strengths to grow the power needed for transformative changes.



Figure 2: An Integrative Leadership Model



As the figure indicates, the process of integrative leadership begins on the inside with purpose and intention. It then moves to the 'how' of change - inclusive, appreciative engagement and dialogue with others for the purpose of identifying an intersection of shared interests and accountabilities between and among diverse individuals and organizations. The process engages the perspectives and interests of these others to inform the design and co-creation of 'what' is to be done to achieve shared purposes and intentions. The leadership-and-change wheel then turns again. Interests and design take on life in strategic actions, choices, and decisions on the allocation of resources to bring about change.

With decisions made and resources committed, 'stuff happens' - things do not go exactly as planned. Decisions and approaches must often be modified and adapted to fit the demands and characteristics of highly diverse and dynamic contexts and situations. Having created the design together, the stakeholders work through the 'stuff' together.

Finally, the circle of integrative leadership and change moves to an assessment of results or 'design as research'. Intervention designs, decisions, choices, and actions are evaluated to answer the question 'So what?'. Did the design work? Were the parties' intentions achieved? What have we learned? How can we move forward to optimize results further?

TECHNOLOGIES SHAPE SELF, OTHERS, AND SYSTEM

In our present world and social and economic reality, many of the actions of individuals are

out of balance not just with each other, but also with the needs of our earthly habitat. We find ourselves in search of new tools and technologies to resolve this state of dynamic tension, disorder, and uncertainty. We are, as Brian Arthur (2009) observes, caught between two huge and unconscious forces in which our trust lies in nature, and our deepest hope for rebalancing our relationship with nature lies in technology. We are challenged to re-establish trust within human society to overcome conflict and poverty while, simultaneously, reestablishing our relationship with the natural world, understanding now - more than ever before - that the conditions of these two contexts and our fates are intimately intertwined.

Social learning and change technologies (such as integrative leadership) are expressions of this underlying tension between peoples, and between people and the Earth. They represent man's toolkit for achieving human purposes and purpose-based systems (Arthur, 2009). Leadership technologies for addressing complex challenges, as I noted earlier, reflect different theories of change which inform and shape micro and macro technologies - what Brian Arthur (2009) calls 'technology domains' - to secure our purposes. The domains of economic and social development, and environmental protection, include sub-domains such as microeconomics, education, and water management. Technologies associated within these domains and sub-domains include practices, tools and methods, implicit and tacit knowledge, and explicit or expert knowledge. An integrative leadership stance is guided by a principle-based belief in emergent, self-organizing change processes. These principles guide the acquisition of the tools needed to address our complex challenges. The tools in turn guide the experiences we have. The experiences further shape the thinking and behaviors of the tool-users until they can no longer distinguish between stance, thinking, tools, and behaviors.

FIVE INTEGRATIVE PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS

Five principles guide the integrative leadership stance outlined in the preceding discussion, preparing individuals to embrace and enter with courage the *middle space*. They form the acronym 'ipedeia' which comes from the Greek 'paideia' meaning to educate, to know all.



Principle I - Intention and Purpose: The first and second principles of integrative leadership, individual intention and purpose, and the inclusive engagement of others, turn on a common axis - shared intentions and purposes. The discovery of this shared axis is aided by tools of mindful self-reflection, appreciative inquiry and dialogue. They enable us to engage our internal Self, our 'silent leader within' (Follet, 1924), our soul, and to engage this Self with the soul of others (Isaacs, 1999 and Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2010) through deep listening for our best intentions and purposes, and for the best intentions and purposes of others which create a basis for innovations that benefit all.

Principle II - Engaging Others: The same tools for mindful reflection, appreciative engagement, and dialogue help us to know ourselves fully so that we can align the Self we place in the world (our position and roles) with internally held intentions, purposes and values in order to engage, know and collaborate with others to effect changes that benefit our shared intentions and purposes. Engaging others on the basis of our shared intentions and purposes is at odds with our current theory of change which has leaders 'engage' others on the basis of hierarchical and mechanical roles and positions. It is a paradigm where 'leaders' think and direct everyone else to do, to follow without thinking. A smaller group, often a third party, keeps score and evaluates how we have done. By leading from a position of authentic self-awareness we are positioned to engage others to think, do and learn together holistically with us. We close the gap, thereby, between our beliefs, words and actions by seeing, hearing and considering how our different perspectives, talents and roles can contribute to achieve what we value in common.

Principle III - Design Informed by Our Differences: With a clear sense of focus, integrative leaders are better able to co-create designs for interventions that optimize valued outcomes. Such designs reflect a commitment to 'mutual learning' approaches to change (Schwarz, 2002) which serve to conjoin what Chris Argyris (1982) called our 'espoused' theory of change and oft-professed openness and adaptability, and our traditional theory 'in use', which is frequently a contradictory embrace of unilateral control and practices closed to mutual learning and change.

Mutual learning employs values and strategies that foster increased understanding, trust and

effectiveness. It does so by embracing the notion that each party has some information, not all; each sees something that others may not see; differences are opportunities for learning; and people seek to act with integrity (Schwarz, et. al., 2005). Approaches to mutual learning are aided by tools and lessons taken from Roger Fisher's work, *Getting to Yes* (1991) and *Beyond Machiavelli* (1996) which help parties involved in complex change efforts to distinguish more easily between 'interest' and 'position' and to identify the intersections of interests that benefit all. By focusing on the importance of the interests of the involved parties, these tools help to quieten the 'noise' associated with the messages of demand, competition, threat, and conflict. With the noise silenced, it is easier to assess true differences in perspectives, talents and contributions, the strengths of which can and must contribute to the creation of interventions that are superior in their design to individually held assumptions and approaches which stimulate innovations whose impacts are, therefore, superior to what the parties could achieve separately.

Principle IV - Enacting and Inacting Ideas as Choices and Behaviors: In our present, fragmented world, one group - an elite of leaders and thinkers - generates ideas and then assigns a second group of followers to enact them. The problem with this equation is that holistic learning is undercut. For effective learning, it is the responsibility of those who generate ideas to 'inact' ideas within their own worlds, and experience the consequences of those ideas, before they enact them in the larger world.

The Work of Bill Torbert and Associates (2004), offers a conceptual framework for integrating and testing the worth of ideas by combining them with choices and actions. The framework is called 'action inquiry'. The 'experience' of ideas in action is essential to adaptive learning and change: experiences learn from experience, guided by ideas. It merges ideas and actions measured in choices and consequences - decisions that are designed to produce results. Action inquiry tools capture the decision sequences and supporting belief systems associated with complex problems within highly dynamic social networks and environments. They are essential to understanding what 'is' in order to 'image' better what 'might be' (Celik and Corbacioglu, 2010), and are indispensable components of an integrative leader's methodological toolkit (Nelson, 2000). By



mapping networks, relationships, decision-and-action sequences linked to specific challenges and contexts, the integrative leader is able to identify the strong and weak ties, and the holes - places where relationships are needed but missing - for wise and effective decision making. By visualizing such decision sequences they are able to question the beliefs and assumptions that underlie current decisions, decision sequences and outcomes. Maps so constructed illuminate the relationships, decisions and patterned beliefs and assumptions that leaders need to understand to make new strategic choices going forward (Easley and Kleinberg, 2010). Seeing and understanding the relationships among friends, followers, and diverse stakeholders equips leaders to influence the decisions needed to enhance results effectively (Schmidt, et. al., 1977). Aligning decisions and resources grows the collective will - power 'with' rather than 'over' others, for change.

Principle V - Adaptive Self-Evaluation and Change: The fifth principle of adaptive self-evaluation, like the other principles, underscores once again the inherently nonlinear and multi-layered nature of wicked problems (Usher, 1995) which, to paraphrase Henry Thoreau, require leaders to be fully awake, to be present to themselves, their assumptions and beliefs, and to the assumptions and beliefs of others as they impact shared learning and transformative change. Again Bill Torbert's (2004) work in the area of action inquiry and the role of adaptive learning loops is instructive. Seen through a system lens, adaptive learning is informed by single, double, and triple feedback loops, and questions not only our efficiency and effectiveness, but also the legitimacy of our choices. A single-loop evaluative feedback loop tells us whether or not our expert-designed interventions and actions advanced us toward our goal. A double-loop self-evaluative feedback loop asks us to question the design of our interventions. A triple-loop self-evaluative feedback loop asks us to question our underlying attention, intention and vision in order to promote mutual learning grounded in self-organizing and self-governing change processes.

Self-governance shares power through mutually designed interventions that are efficient and effective as well as legitimate in the eyes of all - leaders, followers and citizens alike. Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey (2009) underscore the interplay among issues of efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy when

they suggest that ideas alone in a relational world are insufficient to overcome many of the challenges confronting us. They suggest that we are facing a mismatch between the world's complexity and the complexity of our ideas and actions. A complex, dynamic world is best met by what they call a complex, self-transforming and self-governing mindset. Unfortunately their research suggests that, at present, very few individuals, leaders and followers possess self-transforming minds. An individual with a self-transforming mindset is able to stand back from their filter on the world and look at it, not just through it. They are wary of any one stance, analysis, or agenda (Kegan and Lahey, 2009). They are open to engaging and learning from others who are different from them in stance, analyses, and agendas.

Each of the tools and methods discussed in this article have, as their central proposition, the creation of a capacity to stand back, take in and learn from diverse perspectives to fashion approaches that will best secure the shared intentions of all involved parties. The work of Kegan and Lahey (2009) helps us understand our complex emotional and ecological intelligence as well as that of others and, therefore, to solve our challenges. In light of this understanding, they offer a simple but powerful tool in their book, *Immunity to Change* (2009), to help uncover what they call our 'immunity to change' which is commonly reflected in saying one thing and doing another: it is a four-column exercise for identifying the hidden commitments and big assumptions that contribute to this gap between our knowing and doing. For example, a leader may claim to be open to learning and change but in fact, in practice, he seldom asks others what they think. He directs and controls rather than facilitates conversations and dialogues characterized by mutual learning. The hidden commitment the tool may reveal may be his need to feel in control, to be the indispensable expert and authority. The hidden *fear* may be that if he asked questions and acknowledged that he does not always have the answers, his leadership would be undermined and his job threatened. Integrative leaders who successfully address complex challenges engage in circular, dynamic and adaptive thought processes that begin with managing their own fear and uncertainty, and that acknowledge the fear and uncertainty of others. They exhibit what F. Scott Fitzgerald called 'intelligence', the ability to hold two opposing perspectives in mind and continue to function effectively and legitimately.



THE EMERGENCE OF CLUSTERS OF INTEGRATIVE LEADERS

Leadership has, in recent generations, been seen as a largely individual quality in short supply. This is in keeping with our highly competitive, individualistic Western culture: a scarcity of leaders is, itself, a product of our culture. In reality, potential leaders are in abundant supply. The challenge is to establish the conditions under which they can innovate and move our society forward.

Integrative leaders are aware of the interdependent nature of experiences, thoughts, leadership and management: the Self within and the Other without are intimately intertwined through what Mary Parker Follett (1924) called a reflex arc, a creative and innovative circular response:

“I never react to you but to you-plus-me; or to be more accurate, it is I-plus-you reacting to you-plus-me. ‘I’ can never influence ‘you’ because you have already influenced me; that is, in the very process of meeting, by the very process of meeting, we both become different. It begins even before we meet, in the anticipation of meeting (Follett, 1924, pg. 62-63).

Integrative leaders engage others to reflect, think, and act together with them to solve wicked problems. They bring together diverse parties and perspectives to achieve a common interest. They challenge each other’s assumptions and their own, to push individual and collective learning to a higher level. Where there are holes in their knowledge and relationships they identify new partners and contributors to move the process forward.

Individuals who come together to work on ‘individual’ challenges find, in the process of learning in an open-network environment, that they begin to form and deepen learning ties with each other. Clusters and teams for collaborative thinking and experimentation self-organize to create new ways of thinking and doing. They see and map their world with new eyes, connecting their individual beliefs, thinking and work in a way that encompasses the system as a whole. By fostering a diverse, open, adaptive learning world, individuals establish the conditions for self-organized, organic growth and development. The growth occurs in fits and starts. It is an approach to learning and change that contrasts with the

slow, incremental steps characteristic of linear, bureaucratic-controlled growth. Such organic growth is the product of what Follett (1924) calls the ‘activity within and between’ individuals, clusters of individuals, and systems.

The activity-between individuals and clusters of individuals within a larger system is, itself, an outgrowth of a self-organized learning process. It is a process that connects and bridges the intellectual and experiential divides that often hamper innovation and change. This process of ‘relating’ helps individuals, teams and the system as a whole to jump over barriers to change, resulting in learning ‘increments’ that can be measured only by compound interest, transformational change and collective impact (Kania and Kramer, 2011). As Follett (1924, pg. 65) observed nearly one hundred years ago, “There is no such thing as simple interest in the organic world; the law of organic growth is the law of compound interest. Organic (growth) is (achieved) by geometrical progression. This is the law of social relations.” Brian Arthur (1994), an economist whose change models are guided by insights from complexity and chaos theory, refers to this growth process as one of ‘increasing returns’. Organic, nonlinear growth is characteristic of a mindset where abundance, possibility, and openness reign, which stands in stark contrast to the traditional mindset of scarcity, limits and control.

OUR NEW LEADERSHIP DNA - COLLECTIVE WISDOM

Alan Briskin (2010), in writing about leadership, touches on a core attribute of the leadership stance and philosophy I have called integrative leadership. That attribute is *collective wisdom*. Integrative leaders who lead and self-manage, who think and engage with their whole mind (their analytic as well as their emotional intelligence), are using their full DNA complement to demonstrate collective wisdom. They are wise leaders who draw upon multiple perspectives, internal and external, to inform and balance their short and long-term interests. They demonstrate individual as well as collective wisdom. They take into account the whole: the individual whose star burns bright; the cluster of stars that innovate and illuminate a shared path; and the overall system of inclusive leadership necessary for a change in mindset, culture, and practice. Each player - the Self, the Other, and the system as a whole - can be a leader and practitioner of integrative learning and adaptation, playing out their contributions at



intersecting points of scale. Each is part of our evolving individual and collective DNA and our cultural memes - how we do things, and secure order and our well-being.

Briskin (2010), further illustrates the role of collective wisdom for integrative leaders when referencing the musing of a much earlier leader, Marcus Aurelius. Aurelius, an Emperor who reigned over Rome nearly 2,000 years ago, wrote of leadership as a collective phenomenon involving a constellation of teachers. Integrative leaders are teachers. They teach about purpose and values, the importance of a higher calling that resides within each individual. They teach about the engagement of Self and others to learn and model our best intentions as designs for living. They teach about resilience, staying calm during periods of chaos and uncertainty to inform our choices, decisions, and actions more mindfully, wisely and consciously. They teach about the importance of results as measures of a personal and collective accountability against which our intentions, engagements, designs, and decisions are evaluated. Integrative leadership is a process which provides all parties – leader-as-teacher included - the opportunity to learn, adapt, and move forward.

Finally, Marcus Aurelius suggested our Cosmos is a kind of city-state, a community in which “the whole of mankind belongs”. It is a Cosmos in which we are all connected, in which our common good derives from a shared awareness (Briskin, 2010) and where, when guided by our individual and collective wisdom - a wisdom derived from disciplined reflection - we are able to optimize results shaped by our values, interests, knowledge, and experiences. Integrative leaders, one by one, and one with the other, contribute to collective wisdom and collective impact, and a better world for all.

BIOGRAPHY

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