Steps to an
Ecology of Soul

Bryce Taylor

Introduction by Anders Aspling
General Secretary of the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative

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This publication honours the work of Bryce Taylor in his call to evolutionary consciousness. His commitment to working with others and forging relationships with like-minded individuals who shared a similar vision heralded a co-creative impulse for a consciousness that can engender our fullest potential.
Nick Ellerby, Co-director of the Oasis School of Human Relations

"The truth is that as a man's real power grows and his knowledge widens, ever the way he can follow grows narrower and narrower until at last he chooses nothing, but does only and wholly what he must do."
Ursula Le Guin: *The Earthsea Quartet,* Penguin Books Ltd, 1993.

Preface

When Bryce Taylor died in March 2010 he left behind his partner Zena and his sons, as well as Oasis, the entity he had been inspired to co-found in the 1980s. Bryce also left a huge legacy of written work. He and his writing were intertwined in such a way that it is impossible to think of one without the other. He took the vestiges of thoughts, ideas, wonderings and observations and, through his fingers flying on the keyboard, produced a wealth of material in the form of handouts, flyers, manuals and books, which were integral to the work Oasis was involved in out in the world. Oasis was, and is, committed to research and development, and Bryce was its primary conduit.

This book was very nearly completed at the time of his death. Whilst there would have undoubtedly been changes and additions if Bryce had been involved in the editing process, as far as we are able to be sure, this is the book Bryce wanted to publish.

In the aftermath of Bryce's death a fund was established in his name, through The Oasis Development Education Foundation (ODEF)[1], which had been set up by Zena in 1998. One of the objectives of ODEF is to promote research into the transpersonal and the ODEF Board suggested that the fund could be used to publish this book, knowing that its subject matter was of increasing importance and relevance to Bryce in his journey on this earth.

The ODEF Trustees are delighted to have been able to support the publication of *Steps to an Ecology of Soul*. We would like to thank the following for their contribution to the process: Heather Tweddle (Bryce's editor for many years) who has put in sterling work into bringing this book to print; Ian Barnett, Chris Taylor, Steve Dilworth, Hilary Wilmshurst and Cathy Neligan, the readers whose valuable comments have enhanced the book; and the Co-Directors of Oasis (Nick Ellerby, Marion Ragaliauskas, Claire Maxwell and Chris Neligan) who have been unswerving in their support of the project.

Chris Neligan (Chair of ODEF)
On behalf of the ODEF Trustees:
Pat Nixon, Ian Barnett, Lynda McWhinnie and Zena Bernacca

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[1] ODEF changed its name to the Oasis Foundation in 2012.

What people are saying about Bryce and
Steps to an Ecology of Soul

… even the reading replenishes the soul. Bryce calls to that which is unique and individual within each one of us to respond to the trials, dilemmas and challenges of this era of planetary existence. He does it in such a way that his words invariably engage the very core of our being in the desire to make a difference. His encouragement of curiosity and inquiry lights the path of the practice of change, development and transformation.

Hospice work in Africa has a tradition of a holistic approach to the patients and family, and it feels a natural step to equally embrace a Whole Person Learning approach to organising, managing and leading the services and their development, thereby allowing and encouraging a response to health crises and end of life care that embraces a depth of humanity both in the direct and indirect care, and support offered.
Zena Bernacca, Chief Executive Director, Hospice Africa Uganda

When Bryce's work started, the words 'Ecology', 'Soul' and 'Environment' were rarely heard in the discussion of those theories and practices which have now become the ethos of Oasis. Now, when the world of human relations and peer working is about to be radically challenged by the discoveries of neuroscience, Bryce's work points a new direction. *Steps to an Ecology of Soul* is a springboard into the times ahead of us. He has left us with an inspired signpost to follow.
Bill Berrett, who worked with Bryce in creating ideas leading to their having tangibility in book form, particularly in revealing the keystone role which Oasis' skills play in working with the environment – personal, physical and planetary.

A deep spirituality motivated and inspired Bryce's work and his conceptualisation of Whole Person Learning. In most situations he needed to keep quiet about his spirituality because the very word so often triggers confused responses, but if you knew him well then it was blatantly explicit that he was mobilised by a sense of life's magic and an intrinsic dynamic of emergence and fulfilment. To put it another way, in parallel with his intellect and his facility for conceptualisation, his heart was open and passionate and committed to love-in-action. This passion and compassion was not a thought-out philosophical position, although of course he could argue cogently for it, but came from a powerful embodied instinct and direct knowing that all life in its many diverse forms is awesome and sacred and to be supported in its healthy development — children, adults, forests, towns, organisations and planet.
William Bloom, spiritual educator

At last, a gathering of words and learning that challenges received wisdom regarding societal norms, expectations and intentions, and calls instead for a strengthening of the collective, the secular and the humanistic. Bryce puts his faith (and I use the word advisably) in the ability of the human spirit to connect, transcend and progress towards the development of a greater sense of 'us'; meeting in our shared humanity rather than in the externally ascribed conditions that distress, disturb and discriminate.

What aspect of the book most captured my imagination? Hearing Bryce behind the words, challenging us to look upwards and inwards at the same time, to think globally, to develop individually and to act collectively. What remains with me and influences my practice? Being reminded that we need to move from an information revolution to a consciousness revolution, and it starts now and it starts with me.
Claire Maxwell, Oasis Co-Director

'Why am I where I am?' is a basic question for Whole Person Learning. The inner personal journey starts with the realization of the 'Why' of being. This word initiates a debate within an individual and keeps fuelling the 'inner fire', even though it brings pain and suffering along. In the words of Khalil Gibran, *"Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars."*

Willingness to pursue the journey, no matter how cumbersome, is a challenge we all have to take in order to explore newer and higher levels of soul-searching. Finding the meaning of life, and the legacy we want to leave behind, depends upon what course we follow and for how long. This is a choice that we all have to make while shifting from the individual journey to the 'we' journey. After all, in life comes a stage when we need others to relate with.

With these few words I pay homage to Bryce who did wonderful work in his life. To me he was an original thinker and a path finder. His latest work, this book, is a milestone for all those who, while embarking on a similar journey of life, would relate with him in one way or the other.
Mohammad Nazim, Member GRLI, Pakistan; Assistant Professor, School of Business and Economics, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan; Director General, Center for Globally Responsible Leaders, University of Management

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Foreword

The Book and the Author

I met Bryce for the first time on June 21, 2004. We spent three hours together at Oasis in Boston Spa with his colleagues. For me this was a unique experience and a very special meeting. It marked the start of a friendship that lasted till Bryce passed away – and moved on.

It also marked the start of a learning journey for me, where I recognised Bryce as an ever-curious and supportive co-traveller in searching new territory in theory and practice for how we should and could develop as humans – on our own and with and in relation to others.

Bryce's published writing has been of enormous help to many – professionals as well as laymen. Following his writing is like following his growth as a human being, his development – openly and very sincerely expressed, and it has always been easy and joyful to read his work no matter if the texts have been theoretically advanced or more practical and simple.

The same goes for Bryce's latest accomplishment – *Steps to an Ecology of Soul*.

'I', 'We' and 'Us'

Bryce's book is about how to tackle circumstances that are global in scale and systemic in nature. But it begins with you, and me, and our journeys getting to know – and becoming true to – ourselves, and, thus realising our responsibilities towards each other and the planet.

The 'I'

"To live in the most fully alive whole person way possible that respects and regards all life as sacred is a high calling, but that seems to me to be it."

The first part of the book, the 'I' part, is very much how Bryce presented himself to me, how he gave insights and provided learning. Bryce brilliantly combines sophisticated thinking with hands-on pragmatism, guidance and sometimes even instructions.

According to Bryce, seeking your own path and learning to follow it, not in isolation, but for the good of all of us, is of key importance. It lays the ground for being able to fully join in true collaboration and effective co-creation with others for the global common good.

The 'We'

As I write this I've just participated in finalising a report on Management Education for the World for the Rio+20 Earth Summit 2012, and I realise how much we owe to Bryce. The report is filled with his thinking and with what he shared in co-creation within the GRLI and management education communities – from Whole Person Learning to specially prepared, organised and designed gatherings (collaboratories) as a format for dialogue, learning and creating self-generating peer communities or cultures.

Finding new ways of gathering and developing collaborative processes and arenas is at the heart of the second part. Again, Bryce combines wisdom and sophisticated thinking with hands-on guidance on how to make things happen on the ground – how to organise for collaborative processes, how to arrange for co-operative inquiry and how to create dialogue.

He implicitly – and also explicitly – addresses the question of how to train and prepare a next generation of peers for the challenges ahead, paving the way for the future of management education.

He paints a canvas full of thoughts and issues that the management education of the future needs to carefully take into account. And, he does so with guidance for how we together as individuals – humanity – may tackle a complex, unknown and shared future, which we all participate in shaping.

The 'Us'

In the last part he formulates an invitation in line with what we now explicitly are doing at the Rio Summit regarding management education for the world.

He includes critical views on the current state of affairs in the world, proposals for how to move forward and achieve the deeper change needed, and crisply addresses the power of big corporations as a key issue – opportunity and threat – to the future of a global society. He also recognises the limitations of the economic and political systems we operate with and within.

He urges us to find ways to understand and move from planetary citizenship to globally responsible leadership, and calls for projects for transformative learning that address three major strands: individuals being active in planetary concerns; globally responsible leadership; transformative approaches to consciousness and the transpersonal.

This call is much like the call we in the GRLI are making for developing the management education of the future. An education which creates the

businesses and business systems we need for the 21st century – on behalf of society; a management education for the world.

In his ever so respectful and wise way he keeps quite a few ends open for us. Inviting us to his collaborative, safe and co-creative space, to take his thoughts further and transform them into action when we are able and ready, and when the time is right.

Prof. Dr. Anders Aspling
Secretary-General, Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI)
Professor, School of Economics and Management, Tongji University, Shanghai
June 2012

The story of the GRLI logo:
"Three ellipses forming a circle as they expand – our globe.
They represent I, we and all of us – from the smallest to the largest.
They have the colour of a blue ocean and a clear sky."

Author's Preface

Gregory Bateson wrote a book in 1972 entitled *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. It would be hard to overestimate the influence of this book upon activists and researchers in almost every field of the humanities and social sciences. Bateson was a seminal figure, a paradigm breaker to whom all of us who have followed are to some extent indebted.

Steps to an Ecology of Soul is in homage to that influence. It refers to the realisation after years of learning to listen to the soul that it is not, and never can be, a definable entity. Its destiny is always to be a mysterious force and influence acting upon us. For the work of the soul to thrive it requires an ecology – or a home – where it is allowed room to flourish.

The more fractured our consciousness, the more difficult it is to hear the soul's need. The more degraded the planet, the more compromised our capacity to release the soul's potential, and the more alienated we become, the more unfree we are to be with the call of the soul.

'Soul' is a mysterious word – at least to me. I heard it as I was growing up, not sure what my elders were referring to. As an adolescent I was surrounded by 'soul music' and that did make sense to me. Whatever it was that people were referring to by this word 'soul', soul music had it, but it was still an indefinable and mysterious term and I wanted to 'know' what it was. Because I couldn't encounter a simple explanation it faded into the background and I got on with 'my life'. Politics took over from spiritual searching and for a long time in my twenties the idea of 'soul' was not on any agenda. I was near to embracing a materialistic view of the world and everything in it, and certainly was much influenced by explanations that didn't rely on the kind of woolly nonsense I encountered through most religious appeals to meaning.

When disillusioned by politics, I transferred my enthusiasm to social action. Encountering humanistic psychology in its early days, I immersed myself avidly in its methods and techniques and soon went on to learn how to work in that emerging tradition. It was a tradition that more than suited me since it didn't rely on allegiance to existing models of the world, rather it promoted an alternative one – a *holistic* one where everything was interconnected and nothing was 'separate', only distinct.

This appealed to me strongly. It fitted my experience and my temperament to be connected without being obliged: being involved without being taken over;

being able to influence those things which affected me as a right. It also attracted me because it regarded the mind-body split as essentially an outdated limitation in the light of new scientific understanding from biofeedback, cybernetics, early studies in consciousness and systems theory.

The journey in the human potential movement was one of integrating the parts of oneself into a more integral whole and then you were left to work out what to do with the results.

At a time when the increasing and ultimately dominant spirit of the times was to think of yourself as an individual (with little or no reference to the 'society' that Mrs Thatcher in her time as Prime Minister of the UK told us didn't exist), many of the techniques and methods of humanistic psychology were put at the service of instrumental ends for very 'selfish' purposes by many of those who became acquainted with them. Wider purpose, social good and greater civic engagement were not on the agenda. Indeed, on the Diploma in Humanistic Psychology that I helped inaugurate and facilitate, it was always difficult to get participants to pay enough attention to the third strand i.e. social change.

Personal development and group dynamics made a lot of sense to everyone, but social change was surely optional wasn't it? Given that most people were more preoccupied (quite understandably) with themselves, their priority lay in becoming more effective as the person they were in the world in which they existed. These concerns took precedence over just about anything else for the two years of the programme. And, frankly, with the amount of 'personal emotional' work that most people needed to do, it didn't leave much room for the wider world and concerns about it.

Now we live in different times.

The *second wave* of humanistic approaches is beginning to appear. Individuals and groups from that time are increasingly looking at ways to come together, or to relate to one another, out of a concern for the situation in which 'we' find ourselves. It is not an attempt to forge an alliance or to sink differences into some new movement, but to link, to associate, to find ways to make each other's efforts more effective with a little help here or a willingness to support something there.

It is an emerging movement. It has no obvious leaders and no spokespeople. It is, however, tangible and it is something that I have been increasingly aware of over the last three years. During this period I have had many, many rich and rewarding conversations with a wide range of people who, effective and

influential in their own field, are seeking ways to multiply the effects of their contribution by association and connection with others.

This book came out of that learning.

It traces the movement from the 'I' world of the first wave to the 'we' world of the new situation we are entering before sketching out the 'us' world that moves beyond the 'we' to begin to ask the question:

If 'we' mobilise 'our' consciousness to engage with the questions that face us, then how do we begin to think about institutional arrangements that will also be required to manage the planetary crisis?

> "We are discovering that in our deepest essence we are travellers on a journey to wholeness (holiness). Each step along the way is a new revelation and a co-creation that involves changes in all dimensions of our lives and in all fields of endeavor. In the 60s, the growing edge embraced the world of interior individual development derived mostly from Eastern traditions. Our goal was self mastery and self actualization. Self-awareness, meditation and yoga swept through the West. It seemed to be the answer to our increasing fragmentation and alienation.
>
> Focused within, many of us forgot to look at what was happening outside. We awakened to accelerating injustices and inequalities on a planet threatened by profligate lifestyles and modern world views. It was clear that self-actualization was necessary but not sufficient to shape a newly globalized world in the direction of sustainability and compassion.
>
> Conditions in the outer world and the impulse of evolution are calling us to recognize our interdependence and the power of connection. Barriers and borders that were once necessary to become our autonomous and institutional selves, are now falling away. We are learning to preserve our autonomous identity in order to contribute creatively and cooperatively in the new groups that are emerging. These groups are creating new forms of collaboration and distributive power necessary to meet the complex challenges of the first planetary era in history." Nancy B Roof: Editorial in *Kosmos*, Spring/Summer 2008.

Bryce Taylor, 2010

Introduction

"Everything for everyone, nothing for ourselves." Zapatista

The care of all is the domain and speciality of no one group in particular but the *responsibility* of all. Our situation is urgent: a compelling range of dilemmas, difficulties, challenges and issues confront 'us' – whoever we happen to regard as 'our' constituency. None of us anywhere can escape the consequences of some of these issues for they are global in scale and worldwide in impact.

This situation presents a challenge to all those who have a care for the conditions in which we live together and the arrangements under which we govern ourselves. The challenge occurs at three levels: local, regional and global. It can be characterised in three ways – as being of a particular, structural or systemic nature. Local issues tend to be particular in nature, regional issues are frequently structural and global issues mostly have a systemic nature.
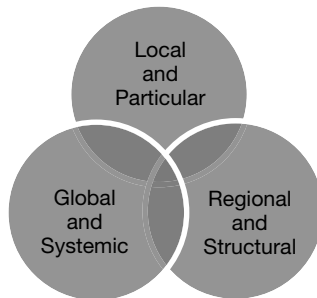
Figure 1: The Three Levels of Concern and Nature of Response

How each of these relates to the others, and how we respond to each and to the whole, is crucial in creating and developing a conscious and co-creative approach to the planetary situation.

Local and particular matters can only be resolved effectively by those closest to the problem becoming more engaged and coming together to develop an effective response. Examples might be congestion charging in cities, or the residency conditions for eligibility to attend local schools, or making decisions about waste disposal and the level of local services offered by public organisations.

Regional and structural issues can only be resolved by much more widely co-ordinated action on the part of a broad range of agencies and bodies. Some would be governmental whilst others represent the interests of various affected groups, such as co-ordination over fishing stocks, agreement over use of water resources, and border security. They would also include dealing with international issues such as the Palestinian 'problem', the build up of hostility between India and Pakistan, and border disputes that unsettle whole regions.

The third set of circumstances is *global in scale and systemic in nature*, and can only be tackled by arrangements on a global scale that are not currently in place. These desperately need to be developed, and examples here might include more co-ordinated international disaster relief, peacekeeping forces on a global scale, responses to environmental issues, an approach to international terrorism, and global trade agreements that are more equitable to those primary producers in the developing world.

All of us live within these three overlapping and interconnecting circles of concern. None of us is exempt from our local issues, all of us are affected by regional systemic conflicts and all of us are differentially affected by the global issues and the consequences of planetary degradation. We cannot all be involved with everything; we must select our priorities, decide upon our 'causes' and campaign for those things we decide are most necessary, given our values and our view of what is worth doing. This gives rise to two key questions:

1. **Given the scope and the range of issues to be tackled, where should/could one put one's efforts?**

2. **What actions make most sense to bring about which results in what order?**

Expressed in even such a simplistic way we can see immediately that the priorities that each of us individually assign to our commitments are not likely to be so straightforward or so easily determined. We each determine where to put our efforts and we, individually, seek out those who share our values and commitments. We come together and, through our collective efforts, bring about influence to enable change.

Taken together, these three levels of response present a challenge to those who regard themselves as committed to democratic practice. Democrats love freedom – the freedom to choose which issues to embrace and which priorities to work to secure. Currently we have pressure groups, campaigning organisations and

activist associations on a local and national scale drawing attention to the environment, the economy, transport, wildlife, farming, and health care, to mention only a few examples.

Clearly some priorities would have greater force and would be more amenable to change than others if we came together and offered a stronger collective stance towards them. Perhaps some activists have always recognised that, whilst they were busy with their own campaigns, others were alive and well and fighting for other forms of social justice. Perhaps there have always been those well-disposed campaigners who celebrate and affirm the victories of others in causes that are 'of a piece' with their own sense of things but not directly aligned to their own. However, it is now a matter of urgency that we find something more than a nodding acquaintance with one another's interests, and that we begin to find some means of talking together, of connecting in ways that make a difference. But how?

That is the question *Steps to an Ecology of Soul* seeks to address, and the starting place is, unsurprisingly, with the individual, but perhaps not in the way expected. Current culture has encouraged an individualistic ego; one of consumerism, competition and separation. Yet the way forward is collaboration: working together, acknowledging and working with difference from a very local level of neighbours and communities through groups, organisations, nations and regions of the world through to planetary and global concerns and issues.

So we begin with the individual from the perspective of gaining awareness into one's inner journey in order to meet and engage more congruently with others. 'I' is at the centre of the quest to an ecology of soul, yet the journey has to include greater engagement with the world than has been common in the past.

Most traditional religions leave open the question of how we are to live our lives socially, politically and economically, but when they do have an input it is generally prohibitive and controlling. Where there are injunctions about how to act, they are broadly based on the conventions and norms of the period in which the tradition emerged. Although traditional religions attempt to update their thinking, they often find themselves at a point of internal contradiction that leaves the questioning member either unsure of the value of a traditional faith or unwilling to think further than the prescriptions offered.

We now have to engage with the planetary situation over and above any traditional faith structure. An ecology of the soul includes much more than it did; **mysticism and activism need to come together**. Although we cannot be involved across all these interlocking and interconnecting concerns and be equally effective at local, regional and global dimensions, **we do have to pay attention to them all**.

In addition, in this paradigm organisations are seen increasingly as one of the key influences for generating *transformation of being* on a significant scale. We are all part of organisations in some way – whether as employees, managers, owners, clients or customers. Transorganisational connections through partnerships, through relationships with stakeholders and supply chains, have huge potential for influencing how we all choose to engage as active planetary citizens. Organisations, on a regional and global level, are playing a leading role in the shift in awareness, in levels of consciousness and in engaging with planetary issues through what they bring about by way of products and services, and by the way they progress across the planet. We need to recognise this.

We have to be willing to engage with what we don't like, with what we don't know and with what we would rather put aside. We have to recognise that the path ahead is not one any of us can follow alone, but one which involves the contributions of many. That means risk and a need to trust, and learning how to trust oneself is difficult. As the great physicist David Bohm observed, it is a great challenge to put our effort behind an activity the outcome of which is uncertain, but this, in one sense, has always been the challenge of the spiritual path. Once we move beyond the safety of the ego's protective limitations, then we are on a path of uncertain direction where discernment is vital.

To address these questions and concepts, *Section One: Effective Oneness*, begins by exploring the inner life, before *Section Two: Moving from 'I' to 'We'* moves into examining the shift to engaging with others, then *Section Three: The Global Dimension* addresses the transformation to planetary issues and attention, concluding with an exploration of globally responsible leadership.

Section One

Effective Oneness

1. The Embodied Experience

> "The only way to determine the level of inner transformation or enlightenment is by its expression in the world. The enlightened heart lives not for itself but only for the transformation of the world, which means the evolution of consciousness. The world that we're living in will evolve as quickly as the individuals and institutions that govern it do. It's all one process." Andrew Cohen, August 2005.

Human life is an embodied experience and suffering is an essential element within this embodied human experience, as is learning and the evolution of consciousness. The most intense form of the embodied experience is the journey to becoming open and willing to participate fully with the whole of ourselves in the learning available to us through all our capacities and senses, and to make sense of it as an expression of the Divine at work in us and of the Divine at work everywhere else.

Being open to encouraging whole person[2] experience involves recognising and contributing to bringing about the capacity for wholeness elsewhere, too, since I cannot be whole so long as there are aspects of creation that are in need of repair or are damaged. It is a high calling to live in the most fully alive and whole person way possible, where one both respects all life and regards all life as sacred. But that seems to me to be it. So learning is essential, mistakes important and lessons vital.

I am a vehicle of the process of creation liberating itself into ever more complex and amazing forms. I don't know where that is going or where 'it' will end, but I do know that we each have a unique and distinct contribution to make in that unfolding – however we do it and whatever perspective we use to explain our contribution.

We 'cannot not' contribute, but we can contribute with varying degrees of awareness, with more or less willingness to be accountable for what and how we contribute, and we can determine to be more intentional in our actions and in learning from their results.

We are distinct but not separate from the ground of being and all that is. We are

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[2] A whole person approach is a holistic approach to learning that puts the learner at the centre of the learning enterprise. It is promoted through models of peer learning and assessment, and the Oasis School of Human Relations has spent over 20 years pioneering whole person approaches to learning and peer-based methods of assessment.

also unique and therefore we have a contribution that is, similarly, uniquely ours. This means that the most intense form of the human experience is one that rises to what I would see as the spiritual challenge – *the challenge to engage with the Divine as a contributor and collaborator*. It is not to be confused with a living out of the 'spirit' as though the spirit was somehow outside of us and operating upon us. It is in us and operates with us: we are part of it, as it is part of us.

A view of the human experience as essentially a passive expression of the 'spirit in action' has no interest to me. A view that sees all that occurs as part of some 'meant to be' fatalistic acceptance of whatever consequences accrue is, likewise, of no interest to me. These are, to me, wayward and self-deceiving forms of avoidance of engaging with the full human experience.

To leave all in the hands of the spirit makes the human experience obsolescent and the will redundant. If all is in the hands of the spirit then it is doing a fine job, so why are we interfering at all? If it knows best and our plans do not succeed then we have nothing to learn, so why do we have plans at all? Why not let everything drift in the spirit of the spirit?

Participatory Spiritual Inquiry

A major reason for my interest in Participatory Spiritual Inquiry is that it enables people to move from beliefs 'about' to experience directly; to let go of what they 'suppose' is the case and to investigate what is. It encourages them to be open to what comes from such inquiry and to revise what meanings are possible. It supports them to be willing to allow their beliefs and values to evolve, and they themselves with them. They are encouraged to become authors of their spiritual experience rather than recipients of someone else's views or subjects of someone else's doctrines, however carefully they are oppressively put before them.

In doing so they engage with one another in all their dimensions; intra/inter and trans/personally. What emerges is then not the work of the spirit acting without human agency, but spirit arising out of and in conjoint engagement with human agency – and much of it is distress-ridden, cumbersome, awkward and conflictual at this point in our evolution.

But with good will and some simple rigour we are on our way to making meaning together and uncovering more of our spiritual inheritance as we express, explore and, most importantly, co-create our experiences both together and with the Divine.

Persons become more acquainted with their own unique responses, their manageable difference from others and the deep complexities of their own

version of the human condition. In all this they become less precious about their own 'take', more provisional about their own understanding and they become much more deeply interested in the expression of their evolving authentic perspective.

As they deepen their engagement with themselves and move the locus of authority further within, they become more self-respecting and more interested in giving voice to that which they experience as their provisional authentic view. The joyous expression of one person finding a new element of their own nature, or new facet of their relationship to the Divine or an additional feature of their deepening connection with another, is something that can hardly be overestimated for changing the condition of the world.

Anything less than this kind of exciting, unpredictable and very human form of being in spiritual community holds no interest to me. Finding those others who are learning together which methods, techniques and approaches can be brought into the equation and how far we can offer an invitation to others is of interest to me, because only if I am actively encouraging the growth of whole persons can I become more of the whole person to which I aspire.

2. Wellbeing and Consciousness

Wellbeing and consciousness are deeply interconnected, but just how is not easy to describe or be certain about. For example, there have been individuals throughout history who have suffered appalling injuries of a physical, emotional, or mental kind and they have transcended the effects and gone on to develop a level of consciousness about which most of us can only speculate. Clearly, impairment to our wellbeing does not necessarily mean that our awareness will be handicapped. One has only to think of Dr Stephen Hawking and the physical deformities of his condition to realise it has interfered little with his amazing conceptual prowess. All that said, however, the importance of the link between mind/body/soul/spirit is a common theme running throughout most Western traditions.

There is also a distinction to be made between regarding consciousness as a set of discrete and different states, and as a spectrum that has an extension of consciousness: *consciousness is only an expression of our current understanding*.

> "Yes, it seems to me as a mystic who has 'seen' and 'been' the whole and the discrete, that the universal system of energy, which incorporates consciousness, could account for both phases of manifestation. The hardest part for me since a trance experience in 1996 has been to describe and explain how spirit and mind (energy and consciousness) can appear as separate and yet be integrated. In trance the whole opens up like a 'magic eye' with distinct layers: layers which look a bit like the layers of a computer system might look like if you could actually see and be them.
>
> But upon return to normal consciousness, however, the layers become as one again – unified, integrated, possibly at the particle level... I therefore believe that the experience of trance is largely a training exercise – yes, and a revelation. It enabled me to see/experience the layers, but also to realise that they must be integrated in order to function adequately on the material plane."
> Lyn D Andrews

Thinking, concepts, memories all tumble along; feelings arise, wishes, desires, judgments come to us out of we know not where and suddenly intrude into the unknown stream of experience that travels through us. Consciousness is the partial beam of light that is cast upon the part of the whole that we are able to 'see' at any one moment out of all the contents surging through our experience within us.

Consciousness and the soul

We bring to our consciousness the contents of our soul, but this is only one part of our soul life. Our emotions and varying feelings – longing, impatience, hope and doubt – will draw us toward the future point, to some 'where' or some 'thing' beyond where we are now and where we may have wished to go. We may become drawn or pulled in a direction that hardly seems of our own choosing and yet we know it is happening only to us.

Our soul lives within two streams: one of concepts, ideas and memories that we draw from the past; one of our longings, feelings and emotions which come to us from the future. At every moment we are the meeting ground of these two streams. This is within the realm of the soul and this clashing of the two streams is our consciousness. The clash between past and future creates the present which is our form of consciousness; we experience the flow of it as 'now' and yet it goes on in time and through space, which in turn dissolves as our concentration slips into time once more. We might imagine it as a continuous process of becoming and disappearing, following and fading: an unceasing coming and going.

The body as the 'temple of the soul'

The body as a 'temple of the soul', the cultivation of emotional equanimity, the need to cleanse our thoughts from mental detritus, and the cultivation of a sense of spiritual connectedness are universals in all the great traditions because there is a recognition that *we are what we eat, we are what we think* and *we are what we do.*

The aim is not to be so ruthlessly congruent and so deeply full of integrity that we are stiff, lifeless embodiments of doctrine, but that we find a realistic relationship to the varying aspects of wellbeing and have some sense of where the work for each of us lies. For example, not everyone needs to learn to meditate for years, nor does everyone need to change their diet, but *all* of us need to develop a conscious awareness of where our practice lies.

Five major, irrevocably interlinked areas of our wellbeing contribute to this notion of the body as 'temple of the soul'.
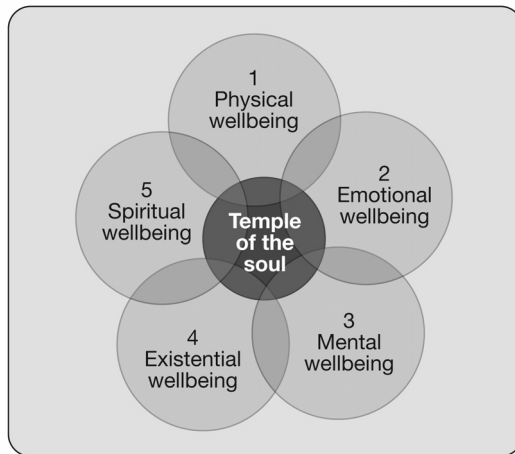
Figure 2: The Five Interlinked Areas of Wellbeing

1. Physical wellbeing

Physical wellbeing is perhaps the starting point. This is the body-mind link and it includes:

- Diet and exercise
- Patterns of sleep
- Personal rhythms
- Maintenance of energy and alertness
- Developing a relationship with the physical self
- Understanding the purpose of incarnation into physical form.

2. Emotional wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing is a less clear field, with a number of confusing or restricting influences. In our own society there are many rules about inhibiting the flow of emotional energy leading to our confining expressions of strong emotion to particular times and occasions. Few of us are given any help in learning to work with feelings, or in developing the understanding that our emotional life consists of so much more than having to deal with unpleasant feelings; it is more to do with a deeper sense of relationship with our inner life.

Moods and shifts of feeling states are part of what we can work with and relate to. Fear, anger, guilt and shame are the disabling emotions, and understanding that we do not need always to attempt to control or eradicate them is an important part of developing emotional or ***affective competence***.

Affective competence includes:

- Being in touch with feelings and being able to communicate them
- The need for 'good enough' relationships for effective communication to happen
- The ability to experience a spectrum of emotions
- Knowing feelings and using them constructively
- Recognising that we construct our own emotional reality
- Learning to take responsibility for our feelings
- Remembering that feelings are not everything.

3. Mental wellbeing

Our mental wellbeing relates to how we construe and construct reality. It is that complex assembly of beliefs, concepts, attitudes, opinions and perceptions together with the emotional cast they acquire or hold over us. Our mental outlook is closely linked to our emotional life, but it is a separate aspect of our make-up. For many people, there is confusion of the thought with the thing and there is the danger of becoming trapped in self-fulfilling prophecies and our own mental loops.

The effects of change, sudden disruption or unexpected experiences, a crisis of values, a period of religious doubt, and anxiety over our security (material or emotional) can disturb our mental outlook. It may undermine our mental wellbeing, and it may produce a disabling sense of uncertainty.

Mental wellbeing includes:

- Affirmation of past learning
- Unpacking 'shoulds' and 'oughts', and the cultivation of choice
- Adopting conscious values
- The development of awareness
- Acceptance and integration of self and self-image
- Recognition of shadow and its positive and negative qualities
- Understanding that life is to be lived and not made into some 'thing' or a cause, however worthy
- Learning to 'witness'
- Noting where you put your attention
- Becoming aware of the combination of outer-focused and inner-directed mental attention
- Developing an attitude of curiosity and fascination.

**You live what you believe; if you think suffering, you get it.
Whatever you make your enemy will never leave you.**

4. Existential wellbeing

Existential wellbeing begins with a recognition of and an 'at-homeness' with the essential realities of the human condition. The mystery and unfathomability of life is experienced not simply with a sense of existential dread and anxiety, but with a recognition of life and death as necessary parts of the human drama. There is no longer the requirement, or the need, for the comfort of illusions to make life bearable, and interest moves away from the personality and towards wholeness and integration. Personal authenticity and personal integrity take up more internal space and the importance of external and goal achievement fades; ego satisfactions reduce their compelling power.

Existential wellbeing includes:

- The inner search
- Confronting defences
- Living in experience
- Shedding the unnecessary and the irrelevant
- Art, music, poetry and cultural expression taking on new significance
- Contact with broader concerns and powers
- Social concerns have less prominence.

> "For me, this was a discovery that in a crucial and compelling crisis, in spite of comfort and sympathy from others, one can feel utterly and completely alone and that, at bottom, the experience of loneliness exists in its own right as a source of power and creativity, as a source of insight and direction, as a requirement of living no matter how much love and affirmation one receives in his work and in his relationships with others."
> Rowan and Reason: *Human Inquiry*, John Wiley & Sons, 1981.

5. Spiritual wellbeing

Our spiritual wellbeing is often left out. The decline in relevance and immediacy of much traditional religious observance and many conventional faiths has left many people feeling spiritually desperate and very much alone. The absence of the sacred in our lives brings a great sense of despair to many and, whilst the thirst for sensation to fill it as a means of escaping the dreariness of it all or the attempt to steal other spiritual practices may be appealing, the practices are only a means to an end. They are a finger pointing to the moon and not the moon itself. All the *vision quests*[3] in the

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[3] Since time immemorial, people have gone to the wilderness to seek guidance and renewal, to let their old lives and old selves die, to find the conditions where spirit may be rekindled, reborn within them – this is the Vision Quest. Those involved engage in an age-old ceremonial pattern: completion of an old life, movement through the threshold of the unknown, and return to the world reborn. People in any life stage or transition will find meaning in this powerful process.

world won't bring you face-to-face with God until you are ready.

Spiritual wellbeing includes:

- The search for 'truth' over sensation
- The cultivation of inner peace, compassion, love and a reverence for life
- Developing a sense of oneness with creation
- Transcendence above personal identity
- The preoccupation moves to being and becoming, and away from doing and achievement.

These aspects of the spiritual life are usually acquired after long devotion, many setbacks, periods of great trial and tribulation, and are often only glimpsed rather than forming the perpetual experience of the seeker. Purification and demonstration of commitment are usually required by anyone serious in the quest.

"We think of God as a reality who speaks in our psyche.
One never knows what God may ask of an individual." Von Franz

3. The Individual Journey

"It is the intensity of the longing that does all the work... Where we are going is here." Kabir

Awareness: from seeker to seer

The individual journey is an essential pre-requisite for embarking upon the 'we' journey. Many are tempted by the 'we' concept yet in order to embrace this fully and effectively the individual needs to be grounded, centred and connected, and this occurs through paying attention to the inner personal journey.

To begin with there is little awareness of what the authentic self is and the seeker starts out believing they are not enough. There is no reference point other than their low self-esteem and so they can't trust anything. It is this place we have to get beyond and it is through the search – the inner journey – that they realise they *are* enough, but this will not happen until we reach a place of having no agenda and stop having the need to follow a conventional path.

Those who seek you out and those who find you, just as those who are attracted to you and those you attract, are all swapping fakes – they may look genuine but they can't be. Why would they be looking for someone to trade with, if they had it in themselves? When the awareness that 'I am enough' is reached there is no longer any need to look for any perceived deficiency in someone else and no need, either, for others to do the same to you.

You can give to yourself – you have what you need: you are enough.

This is one signal that you are letting go of sentimentality – of wishing that anything is other than it is and being willing to look at things in order to find out what they mean. It's not easy, but the rewards, of course, do come in time, and sometimes in a moment. It takes you a long way from where most people are living out their lives into a much freer space where the other, more transpersonal, dimensions are at play more of the time and with less interference.

"Only be what you are and then you do not have to try to be anything – you do not have to prove anything. How can you prove what is? And whatever it is that you are will then be right. You have to find yourself and not somebody else." Osho

The journey at this stage is from *'seeker' to 'seer'* – very different, yet they sound, and they can seem, so alike.

Finding the path: walking the way

Individuals are sidetracked in their existence by any number of distractions that draw them from the source of their true intent, so much so that they may lose it altogether or connect with it so little that they forgo any effort of seeking it. You need to be willing to work with:

- What you've got
- Where you are
- How it is.

And most of all:

- Who you are.

Further there are other supplementary questions that are useful in this inner exploration:

- What do you attend to?
- What do you look for?
- What do you observe?
- What information do you collect?
- What use do you put all these things to?

All these determine how far you stray from your purpose, and any attempt to avoid facing any of these aspects will skew the endeavour.

There is no one path nor is there only one way of entering and following your path. You may '*enter the stream*': finding yourself on your path quickly and with pleasure, being able to let go easily. Great suffering may be the gateway for some of you: a quick but painful process. You may experience a slow, gradual and pleasurable experience through long years of steady practice or, in contrast, your path might be equally slow and gradual but as a result of a steady overcoming of suffering.

Whatever the 'entry' process, there are a number of qualities that, when cultivated consciously and with intent, will greatly enhance the inner journey. Any and all of these can deepen our appreciation of these qualities, so important in overcoming the confines of the ego.

Table 1: Qualities to Cultivate

Qualities to Cultivate	
Forgiveness	Inner fire
Unity	Receptivity
Acceptance	Non-clinging
Self-respect	Balance
Leisure	Trust

Inner contemplation on our deepening understanding of each of the qualities is a valuable exercise for anyone exploring the inner life and its relation to 'right action'. Exploring the links between and amongst them, inquiring into the way they are currently at work in our lives, and sensing the balance between each of them in our current phase can provide useful information about how we are managing our inner life and the demands of the outer world.

Fostering an interest in cultivating a balanced relationship is an important part of the inner journey and, depending upon the phase of life and the pressure of current circumstances, the actual expression of our relationship to these qualities may change. So there are times when we need, for example, to be receptive, and times when we need to be in touch with our inner fire. It is important not to lose sight of our relationship to each of them and their contribution to our sense of wholeness and wellbeing.

The soul level

When working at the soul level it is about much more than emotional or psychological work – though such work is essential and cannot be evaded. Soul level work is qualitatively different because the intent is not to make you a 'better person' (able to conform more acceptably to social norms) or to give you greater advantage in the market place or even to make you 'better at relationships', though each of these things has a place and an importance. The priority shifts to something much more profoundly personal – not individual, but personal.

> It is a commitment to strive to remove those obstacles, investigate those conflicts and to manage those impulses in such a way that you become freed of their dominion over you – no matter what the cost.

This almost inevitably puts you at odds with all around you: friends and family; social norms; seeking praise, recognition and power; wealth. Anything that you

put in front of this overriding search becomes your god and you find you are worshipping it, **because anything that you find yourself willing to compromise over becomes the obstacle that will prevent you from forming your covenant with the Divine**.

All this being so, as all those who walk the path discover, then the journey is necessarily a personal one and it is taken, ultimately, alone.

It is this dual aspect of the journey – that it takes you inward *and* alone – that makes it so difficult and potentially threatening to all you thought you held dear. It invites your demons to appear in all their raging glory and challenges you to confront in no chosen order all those unfinished elements of your life that you have quietly or determinedly put aside. It is no wonder that the literature warns of the risk of madness when this aspect is undertaken without support because there are times when you (if you are fortunate) know your own view of things is anything but reliable, and the steady hand of a supportive friend and a speaking partner is indispensable in order to progress.

But such a journey soon leads to a greater recognition of your own distinctness (often experienced initially as separateness and even as 'specialness' – a forgivable but dangerous inflation). There is also a strong likelihood of the release of unexpected levels of energetic and transformative power: massive shifts in one's familiar sense of self; changes in diet, amounts of sleep, exercise and rest; sudden realisations and immediate inexplicable understandings can 'arrive'.

Habits that have been previously overwhelming in their power can simply fall away; decisions that have been struggled with over long periods can 'sort themselves out' with an inner certainty that is unquestioned.

Since this is all happening for the first time it is often a period of deep and confused uncertainty. Feeling certain about something that has been beyond resolve is not an easy thing to rely on and, of course, the risk of being 'wrong' is never far from the surface. Doubt has its place and yet it can be the greatest waste of energy. However, without the presence of doubt there is only certainty and the temptation to fanaticism. Thus doubt enables us to be open to new learning, to review, revise or overturn what we previously thought or understood. Some of the time it can be exciting and exhilarating and at other times deeply exhausting, as though the Tiger won't let you get off and have a rest (the Tiger being your struggle to let your soul have its say).

There is a likelihood of new levels of relationship to the 'other' since the 'other' may experience incomprehension about, and may even feel threatened by, the changes they observe in the journeyer. On the other hand, there may be others who seek you out in order to avoid having to make the journey into their own woundedness. The development of real humility gives recognition to the place at which the journeyer has arrived, appreciates the 'other' for where they are, but does not pretend that they are both in the same place. In these ways, it requires constant vigilance to identify the fetters to realisation and the snares of delusions pertaining to the self.

So, too, there can be a great over-reliance upon the efficacy of good works, and temptation to get into the 'helping game' as a way of demonstrating, if not to others at least to yourself, how worthily you are managing your new found humility! Remember that those deeds that arise from doing are simply commercial transactions, even though they might be with the Divine. If the aim is to centre into being, then being is all it takes, but it does take all you've got.

It is also important to realise that creativity is the power of the universe and that sexuality is one vitally powerful expression of it so you must beware how far you evade, indulge or avoid your sexuality. In addition, there is a temptation to pretend to an eternal love for all beings, yet if this is expressed whilst harbouring envy and jealousy it only fools everyone else, and even then only for a time. Better to be where you are, then you can do the work that is there to do.

> "The only lasting beauty is the beauty of the heart." Rumi

A teacher

The aim of the teacher is to create a place where the seeker has genuine encounters to enable them to meet those things in themselves they need to find if they are to move forward and develop their awareness and understanding. This involves certain recognitions:

1. **The obligations of choice**: taking responsibility for one's own decisions, actions, and way of life.

2. **Presence**: living in your becoming.

3. **The work**: developing an openness to the work that is about being present.

4. **Dealing with things differently**: cultivating the 'witness' to help shift the patterns of embedded activity and habit.

5. **Practising destiny**: understanding that the next moment arises out of this one and this one is the only one we have.

6. **Helpful contributions to difficult situations**: if the goal is liberation then the price is whatever it takes. Unflinching and unsentimental confrontation with oneself is a necessary 'pastime'.

7. **Finding the path; walking the way**: there comes a point where there is only that which there is to do. As Ursula le Guin observed in *The Earthsea Quartet*: "The truth is that as a man's real power grows and his knowledge widens, ever the way he can follow grows narrower and narrower until at last he chooses nothing, but does only and wholly what he must do."

8. **Qualities are an expression of development**: what we bring to the situation is a result of what we have transformed out of our previous experience. Over time, that produces a characteristic quality that has little to do with personality or pride but much to do with living as near to one's purpose as is possible.

9. **The cycle of transformation**: as Osho says: "There is a period of transition, several if you are serious about developing yourself, when things start falling apart and if you ask a psychologist he will say this is a 'breakdown' but it is a breakthrough."

10. **Taking up the role of the Warrior**: "The self-confidence of the warrior is not the self-confidence of the average man. The average man seeks certainty in the eyes of the onlooker and calls that self-confidence. The warrior seeks impeccability in his own eyes and calls that humbleness. The average man is hooked to his fellow men, while the warrior is hooked only to infinity." Carlos Castaneda

An emergent process

"The future enters into us… long before it happens." Rilke

There are many ways to the beginning, and the ways to the beginning are to be valued but they are only that – a starting point. Most of us fall in love with the first path that enables us to begin to make connections and sense the greater pattern to things, but we need to explore and to test out approaches in order to find ones suitable to our phase of life, our temperament, our current situation and issues.

No one path in our times is likely to be *the* path even for one person; we are in

need of influences from many sources. This, however, brings with it the risk of trying everything and anything and sticking with nothing. That is not what is being suggested here. It is about discernment, of looking more deeply into one's condition to ask oneself, 'What need here requires most attention?' and, 'What form of exploration would most answer it wisely?' Most approaches can be assigned under one of the headings below.

1. **Therapeutic**: predominantly a healing activity relating to those situations that recur and which illuminate where and how we are wounded in ways that restrict our capacity to move forward.

2. **Educational**: our usual sense of learning that concerns itself with what the person makes of the experiences they seek out or which find them.

3. **Developmental**: brings into play other factors and social influences that are often not given sufficient recognition and provides a wider perspective from which to assess the impact of what is being learned.

4. **Lived inquiry**: centres on exploring meaning to find new understanding. It is the art of learning to live through seeking better questions.

In many ways it is this realisation – that one is now living with questions rather than looking for answers through some approach or another – that is a major signal that a new phase of the work has begun. It doesn't stop the need for specialist contributions and help, but such help is no longer sought as a way of 'fixing'. Rather, it is something for deepening understanding, developing awareness, or of seeking an insight that would release more potential.

As an individual progresses on their journey they usually move further and further into *lived inquiry* in so far as the concerns that exercise them begin to shape their day-to-day response to everyday living. Development then is no longer seen as a specialist activity that takes place away from life. Each ascending level of awareness transcends, but also includes those which precede it, thus higher levels neither violate those preceding them nor are explainable by them.

Questions for lived inquiry

The growth movement gets out of hand when it becomes a way of life, or even a way of living life or simply a basis for a way of life. A number of questions are useful for ensuring the process of emergence and development is ongoing, alive and real.

1. How does the spiritual path need to evolve to meet the evolutionary challenges and opportunities of our time?

2. How can we make sure our own spiritual path and practice is 'integral' and informed by both the timeless wisdom of the Spirit and an up-to-date understanding of the human condition?

3. What does it mean to live a life of passionate evolutionary engagement that integrates our deep longing for spiritual transformation and our desire to improve the world?

4. How can we evolve a new context of shared meaning and purpose that is both grounded in a scientific world view and true to the wisdom of the Spirit?

5. How can we come together with other Evolutionaries to begin to create microcosms of evolutionary culture?

6. How can we each help to accelerate the emergence of a new, more integral consciousness on Earth?

The meaning of life differs from person to person, from day to day, from hour to hour. What matters, therefore, is not the meaning of life in general but rather the specific meaning of a person's life at a given moment, so it is important to remember that:

- Mutuality of meeting is a requirement to assist the other
- We must not take things personally
- Research brings to the work a spirit of inquiry, interest and fascination, 'What is living in the spirit of the time?'
- You don't need a model for a question you have not got; you need to find the models for the questions you do have
- You don't need an answer to a problem you have not got; you need to find a better question
- We need to foster real insight into the reality of how things work (organisations as well as relationships); looking strenuously both outside and inside, usually involving someone to help
- We all need nourishment from more authentic people; they are the ones who don't aim to help but who actually do help
- The integrity of authentic people will be recognised by others – even if they are not sure what it is they are drawn towards.

4. The Transition from External to Inner Authority: Intuition, Imagination, Inspiration

"The basis for being whole is self-esteem. In getting people to learn to ask questions you are creating trouble for yourself, because they will start asking questions of you." Carolyn Myss

In learning to be sensitive to the message of the soul, we are learning to turn inwards, learning to listen in new ways, learning to develop an inner authority, and learning to put aside obedience to external power and influences which have been adopted uncritically in the past. So the development of inner listening is a recognition of our primary heritage that all authority comes from within. One major way we learn to listen to our inner knowing is *intuition*, which, in turn, is linked to *imagination* and *inspiration*. These three are intertwined, interdependent aspects of embarking upon the transition from depending upon external sources of authority to becoming aware of and trusting one's own inner authority.

From the conventional to the self-creating person

There are some useful distinctions to draw between the *conventional* person, the *creative* person and the *self-creating* person i.e. someone who looks to themselves for authority to be who they are and who they wish to be.

You know you have moved beyond the conventional person when you know what is supposed to be the way to do things, when you have internalised the social mores and yet have seen through their limiting and confining influence. Now you know how to realise more of your creative potential, but to really take off you have to be more willing to create the 'you' you want to be and to free the spirit that is inside.

The self-creating person is more of an *outlaw* than anything else. There's a stage when we rebel (usually) against the limitations of our social conditioning and then we have to move on. The outlaw is someone who is able to live within the world (to a degree) without causing people to look askance and yet privately, in other times and places, is free to be all that they wish to be. They recognise the rules are not part of the world, but created by social convention, and they don't have to be followed unless they make sense of circumstances.

There are the laws of the universe, of course, and those are more important to follow, to learn about and to learn from, and the outlaw does that whether they like it or not. The great spiritual outlaws always chose to learn how 'it' worked and did not simply make a fetish of being 'different'. They usually pointed out how fettered were our minds in following the routines that no longer made sense and which kept us from learning to 'fly'.

Energetically, in relationships, it means *being more with* rather than doing much of anything. You can, for example, do joint meditations that raise the energetic 'charge' and help move states of consciousness to 'higher' places.

Intuition: the expression of the will

Whatever intuition is, it is a difficult concept to explain and describe. It is largely non-rational, non-linear and non-ordinary in the way it works and it makes information available at a profoundly non-conscious level. It can be highly effective and very unreliable from one moment to another, from one subject to another and from one period of time to another. Some of us have highly developed intuitions; we do not know why or how our hunches come to pay off, only that they do. Others know only too well that a sure way to failure is to follow their gut feeling; for whatever reason, they know they will only be wrong.

Even those with highly developed intuition rarely rely upon it entirely; they usually also have good mechanisms for checking their 'hunches' before acting upon them. Intuition is not a replacement for thought or working things out, it is more a way of identifying the direction, getting the sense of things, or for having a strong 'feel' for what needs to be done.

Trust in oneself seems to be key, and our early development and growth will foster and encourage this kind of trust, or not. A child encouraged to play out her creative hunches, to offer her insights, to give her view of events to those around her, then to have them received with pleasure and acceptance of the gift – not necessarily of the information – will come to have a stronger belief in the range of her mental capabilities than the child who is 'shut-down' and discouraged from repeating anything but the most predictable and reliable of opinions. A lack of imaginative skills, too little creative outlet and the imposition of over-control all diminish our capacity to trust ourselves and feel confidence in our own 'knowing'. For, in the end, intuition is a form of knowing that has tremendous benefits.

This is not about expecting intuition to solve all our problems, or direct our lives, nor is it about a vague sense of foreseeing the future; it is a willingness to be open to other levels of information in order to help us to come to a decision from a place of having no private agenda. It is the *will* in search of the truth. We see or hear something happening and we are engaged with questions like:

- What is the truth here?
- What is really happening?
- How can that be so?

When such questions arise we have to be *willing* to pursue our interest with some determination, yet not with such ferocity that we become overdriven, or else the truth is likely to be the first casualty. Intuition requires developing the awareness of *uninvested curiosity*, of unattached interest. We have to be open to the phenomena we are exploring coming into us, entering us, and be willing to manage the impressions they may make. We then become engaged with such questions as:

- How does it speak to me?
- How does it live in me?

Only then, as we let the experiences and impressions enter more deeply into us, do we begin to sense a response that seeks to go beyond the superficial elements of the situation, and we begin to find a clearer response of recognition from the SELF. The discipline of looking intently, seeing through appearances and beyond into their essence is a form of care linked to intentionality, because each time you are entering into a furnace only to have another layer of your illusions further burned away.

Developing the intuition

Having become aware of the possibilities of listening to one's own intuition, and learning to trust oneself, it then becomes necessary to work on developing the capacity to be consistently and more fully in touch with that awareness. Beginning to develop the intuition necessarily involves developing the self, letting go of so many of the personality reactions to things and the investments that go with them, and replacing them with a much more 'detached' and impersonal view of affairs. This is not a cold remoteness – that, too, costs the individual dear – but a less invested and less involved stance to the events that make up one's own life.

One useful way of thinking of the intuitive capacity is that of a 'scanner' that takes in information before it enters material form. The blocks to our capability of being effective scanners include:

- Our motivations
- The desire to control events
- The wish to bring about an element of compensation
- Being clouded with fears or longings of any kind
- The need to make things safe.

The corollary to this is also the case; the less you know about the subject the more likely the data is to be accurate. The state of detachment from any consequences leaves only the question of your sensitivity as a receiver of the

information. In this way, it can be thought of not as a special skill but an ordinary gift. However, when we trust other people's opinions about what we should do over our own, we are undermining our own discrimination and intuition: hence the link to self-esteem and the importance of listening to oneself. If you don't learn to listen to yourself, then how will you detect that you are becoming more responsive to higher levels of information?

Imagination: the expression of thinking

Imagination is making use of conscious awareness and moving it further, beyond its current familiar limits. It often takes the form of creating a picture of a strong situation, not simply a few fantasies put together with no intent behind them. Here we are asked questions like:

- What will it look like as this unfolds?
- Just what is possible?
- What could there be here?
- How could it be?

Such questions arise when we have enough interest in what is possible whilst also recognising that the imagination requires us to be prepared to face up to what is already present in the situation. It may well mean we are faced with having to realise how much or how little we can affect any significant change. We might discover that we are involved in some set of circumstances where choices or options may be needed, and a commitment has to be expressed that is more complex than usual:

- What should happen here (for the good of all)?

We then begin to make some form of evaluation of the current sense of things – as we presently know it. We need to bring illumination to bear – clarity of thought untainted by sentiment or desire. We therefore need a steadiness of gaze so we can approach what is there to be seen with a calm awareness and a greater sense of responsibility for what implications will follow.

Imagination requires us to enter into the situation. So, for example, when we are with someone in difficulties who is seeking our help, rather than stepping back and thinking of a solution, we can enter more deeply into their circumstances in order to know more fully what is at work there. By doing so, we don't look for an answer or withdraw from relationship, but begin to see what is coming into being and how that might be managed.

We need to remember that imagination has very practical results; the human realm is the product of people having had the imagination to bring about what is here. Without connection to the good of all, imagination can just take individuals on their 'own trip', highly successful in their practice, but without human community. On the other hand, stifling imagination, failing to see what is possible because they are fearful of making waves or causing trouble, holds back many people from fully taking up their place as an individual within their community.

True community supports the imagination of the individual because we all have a contribution to make and none of us has a monopoly on what is needed.

Inspiration: the expression of feeling infused into the mind

> Inspire: breath of life, breath of God; to be moved by or work under Divine agency.

The infinite cannot be comprehended but only hinted at in culturally determined images and personally sensed forms; it is that hint which comes when we stop listening to the content alone, when we sense the music behind the words; it is what arises through the relationship between the person and their experience.

When inspiration appears, something enters into us at an essential level. This is a qualitatively different experience than say, an 'appreciation' of something.

Take music as an example. Something *speaks* to me through the music: we cannot ascribe it to the senses; it is *in* the music. Hearing carries it, but is not responsible for the response that is evoked, and how much of a response is often based on past associations and connections. There is also a universal cosmic dimension that we can get in touch with and in so doing become part of the universe beyond the usual range of the senses.

It may also be through seeing an outstanding model of how it 'can be'; someone who performs his or her work so well that it uplifts us. It may be the example of someone able to act admirably, to tackle difficulties and so on, in a way that calls out a stronger response in ourselves than mere appreciation. Whatever the trigger, the effect is to challenge us to some form of effort in return.

It is not copying and it is not merely emulating someone (though that is often an element) in order to gain their rewards for ourselves. It is more that we wish to propel ourselves forward in our capabilities into new realms as a result of the example that we see before us.

We might be a member of a minority group working to establish freedom from oppression or prejudice and we are moved to find a different level of response than merely being a 'good member'. We 'find' ourselves volunteering for a job, taking up a role, entering into situations from which we would previously have recoiled. It is often an experience that has elements of:

- I must do something
- I will not take that for an answer
- I felt nothing could stop me
- I just knew what to do without even thinking about it.

Inspiration gives people the courage to go beyond boundaries that they felt were unquestionable, to act in ways that are often gloriously exceptional and to respond with a level of commitment or artistic performance that itself is 'inspired'. When inspiration is at work people often 'don't know where it comes from' (when they are referring to the performance or the standard they have achieved).

Inspiration leads somewhere, not simply to contemplation. It is more than being in awe and remaining enslaved. It is not a general call either. It is particular to *me* at this time and place; it is this quality of 'particularity' which gives rise to the movement that follows.

Personal power

Intuition, imagination and inspiration are also linked to expressions of personal power. The more we are willing to become who we are and to show more of ourselves to the world, the more we have to rely upon other information rather than simply working things out at the level of the intellect. There is a need to move out beyond the confines of the expected and the conventional, and once we begin that journey intuition can be a powerful ally in our search for guidance and growth. It is possible to think of intuition as a form of energy response, or vibrational communication, and you cannot trust vibrational information when you have low self-esteem. In the same way, you cannot rely on intuitive help when you are:

- Too invested in the situation
- Too caught up in your own emotional response.

The body is an intuitive energy vehicle and the more personally you take your life, the more your energy will become blocked. This requires us to take back the authority into ourselves and seek 'higher' forms of help to empower us. Essentially, this is a spiritual practice.

It is important for anyone wishing to develop their psychic or intuitive power to ensure that they check who they give their power to and how much of it they give away.

The necessary transition

There comes that point of transition when the individual has to begin to move power away from external sources of influence – money, power, wealth, prestige – and to begin to seek an inner authority. This can be viewed as an inner journey into self-love and personal power. Only when you can develop that degree of impersonality and detachment that is, paradoxically, an indication of real self-love, does the flow of intuition really begin. Before that we may experience 'hits' or intense periods of being 'in touch', but they are often wayward episodes with unreliable breaks and, even at their best, they often fail to operate over any predictable range. In other words, during such periods it seems as if we have experienced something akin to magic, and they have that unpredictable quality about them.

The movement from outside, from external references, to inside is akin to a shift in consciousness; from a personally-based world view to a transcendent, serving position. It can be thought of as a shift from the tribal consciousness, based on outside values, to building our own consciousness. The degree of separation involved in this step is painful: *my* needs have to reshape my life before there can be any return to the tribe in celebration.

Madness may form part of this transition, and it may not follow the conventional stereotype either. It can be viewed as the most radical price to be paid for continuing to seek the life that is yours. It may be a form of torment or agony; an anguish for longings that can barely be identified. It may come as a sense of deep alienation. Its most common characteristic – no matter what the form – is a sense of *deep separation* from the concerns and matters of those around. The conventional suddenly loses all significance and the will to go 'through the motions' is difficult to sustain. Some people have to listen to all the voices from outside and from the past, but now in disembodied form – a kind of replay of history in tortured form, as though all that the person is about to leave behind and surrender gathers together in one last psychic attack.

This period of deep isolation and separation is a time of choosing to either follow the path that is yours or return to that which society, or the family, or the peer group to which you have owed your allegiance and identity to date, expect from you. Facing the risk of abandoning the search is a powerful test of commitment only to yourself; for no-one can make you take the steps that are yours, and you know by this point that the steps you take are not going to be easy. At the same time, you have enough experience to know that there is help

available, that the help often appears in ways which are not always welcome, and that, at times, the very help that comes is hard to recognise as anything but another test. These kinds of 'blessings' are a long way from the romanticised notions that are talked of in New Age magazines.

And when the time comes for you to return to the group again, having worked through and integrated, to some degree, the main features of this phase, you discover that you are not valued. You are altogether too threatening to many and so you have to begin again the search for that community of folk who will share your interests and concerns and who will accompany you on the journey that is now inescapably yours.

The need for support at a distance
This phase can be thought of as confronting the seeker with the weaknesses that make them give their power away to others. At times of the most acute phase, the person in retreat is to be watched at a distance, given subtle, and often indirect, loving help. This is not a manipulative form of help, but a genuine extending of love to the pain and suffering of the other in their period of crisis. When this takes the form of social exposure, personal disgrace, or public dishonour, the importance of those who know and understand the process, and yet who cannot live the other person's pain for them, can offer that loving sense of acceptance and recognition for the 'person that is' rather than the personality that is being broken.

Very often the result of such periods of deep personal crisis is that on the return to more 'normal' life, in terms of outward appearances, there is often a capacity to heal.

Section Two

Moving from 'I' to 'We'

5. Moving into a World without Boundaries

"What do we want to build together?" Philippe de Woot[4]

The demise of the public space

As we seek to find new ways of being in relationship in all dimensions of our lives, whether that be in personal connections, in groups or as members of much larger entities, it is useful to know something of the background to the position in which we find ourselves. In many traditional cultures there were places and occasions when the community gathered together to discuss, to administer justice, to pass on knowledge and to maintain coherence within the community. Much of that has been lost.

During the course of the 19th century, the creation of wider educational provision provided an industrial workforce with the minimum requirements to work in the factories. This was education as an instrumental purpose dressed up in the fig leaf of the mission to civilise and enable citizens to participate in their society.

The link in the past was to a stable society, a moderate level of educational attainment, and a limited opportunity for members of the working class to enter the ranks of the middle class. Now, we have a very different class system and class structure in place, and there is much less of a public space that we all agree on and share. Further, whilst we all take advantage of living in a secular state, it is little discussed and few people know how fragile it actually is in the face of fundamental extremist appeals of all kinds.

Educational provision once provided the 'space' where such concerns found expression and encouragement. This was largely lost when education became party political, both through interference in the curriculum and structures, and also as it became more and more decoupled from the impact of innovative developments (especially the internet). There is increasingly a danger of confining the validity of this dialogue to the exercise of academic discourse as educational provision itself becomes regarded as a commodity to be acquired or 'consumed'. Along with this development goes the limited connection of academic learning with its application to the wider world.

Once upon a time, the concept of the 'educated person' carried with it an expectation that the individual would make an effective contribution to their wider society – *to be an educated person was to be an active citizen.* This shared understanding and social expectation has all but disappeared in the

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[4] Philippe de Woot: *Should Prometheus Be Bound?: Corporate Global Responsibility*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

search for qualifications and marketable skills, and, as a consequence, it has become increasingly legitimate to gain knowledge predominantly for personal economic gain.

Whilst competing perspectives and alternative discourses can be highlighted and illustrated, their exploration and integration into the developing understanding of the individual takes time, requires support and is, indeed, on-going throughout life. It invites regular and continuing dialogue, not in terms of professional supervision, which confines itself often to procedural, performance and/or inspectorial-driven processes, but through open, honest and fearless exchange about work content.

This form of relating does not appear to be a central priority in current educational provision nor does it figure much in professional preparation, leaving an increasing gap of deepening concern in a pluralist society. Reconciling communities of faith and belief, addressing issues that confront professional groups of all kinds, and how these overlap, interfuse, and conflict within and between individuals and their varying allegiances, makes the notion of the nature of *'the good society'* and how it functions a concept in need of urgent reformulation.

The crisis in the public realm

Our Victorian forefathers (mainly men, after all) laid the foundations of a structure of civic institutions, public spaces, communal rights and responsibilities in answer to the growing problems of urbanisation and the effects of the industrial revolution. Public service on a major scale became a response and a means of creating a framework for urban life to sustain a growing population: providing educational facilities (schools, libraries); healthcare and welfare provision (public health measures, parks and recreational areas); leisure amenities (swimming pools, tennis courts and so on); and a civic structure for the arts and culture. The police service and local health arrangements (and, later, the arrival of the NHS) gave an inheritance that covered the lifetime of the citizen across all aspects of public life. The municipality of this public provision bore testimony to the paternalism of its origins and little active engagement was expected of the citizen.

It is a legacy that has been allowed in part to decay, in part to collapse by neglect, and in part it has been dismantled deliberately. The public realm is no longer the guaranteed preserve and arena the active citizen can take for granted as a place of action, debate, dialogue and community.

Similarly, those who once took pride in serving 'the public', who valued the title and the role of 'public servant', have had their reputations tarnished, their

morale undermined and their commitment questioned as the forces of change have swept through our society over the last 25 years and more. Thus we arrive at the situation we find today, where the public realm is a largely unprotected domain, staffed by people held in less and less esteem by themselves and the wider public. Further, the institutions in which they work inspire diminishing confidence in their continuity or their 'services' surviving.

Such a situation is not one to encourage lively discussion, exciting debate and enthusiastic picture-painting of future possibilities, yet without discussion and dialogue the effects upon those who serve the public realm and the public realm itself will continue to feed the decline.

Finding meaning in a calling

The public realm is the most obvious arena for generating the wider dialogue about how we come together to face our global challenges, and this requires enormous amounts of energy and commitment. A modern secular society stands in danger of lacking a vocabulary adequate to the task of exploring or describing the numinous, the mysterious or the ineffable. A secular society depends upon two key features:

1. Protecting a public space for all contending positions to find a voice.

2. A public space that encourages pluralism without favouring one expression over others of how the sacred should be acknowledged.

A secular society needs a variety of means of communicating otherwise there is the risk that difference is reduced to sameness; or that difference is regarded as so great an obstacle that dialogue is quite impossible.

The rightful concern to protect the public domain from the claims of any particular group or sect has, however, now brought with it increasing restrictions on the possibilities of discourse between different groups and communities of faith. There is a widespread fear of inflaming already sensitive constituencies by challenging or opposing the claims that are made for the rights of one party to be privileged over another. This fear even threatens to undermine the ways in which some categories of experience and meaning, which transcend faith communities, religious groups and/or those without specific affiliation, can find acknowledgement across the divide. As a result, dialogue itself is challenged and this renders much meaning lost.

A major consequence of this absence of vocabulary and discourse is the inability of professional groups to bring the issue of meaning, the nature of ethics and the complexity of ethical choices into significant focus, especially in

the training and preparation of future members. As professionals, we may understand what we are expected to do but we do not always understand what this actually means.

This leaves many of those entering into professional life reliant on their broader background as their only resource to face ethical choices and moral dilemmas. Exploration of such challenges is thus rudimentary and its absence may reflect a human reluctance to address the more difficult issues of life. However, at a planetary level we are no longer able to avoid facing the consequences of the global situation. The time to address the fundamental question of, 'So, what does this mean?' has come for all of us, wherever we stand and no matter what position we take. The temptation to disconnect in some way is precisely what we must resist for the sake of all of us.

We could summarise this issue with the questions:

1. **What do we owe to one another?** What are the bounds and obligations to our social contract around matters of meaning and mystery? (In other words, when is it legitimate to 'not know', but it is appropriate to come together to 'work it out'?)

2. **How do we begin to acquire a way to build dialogue** across differences that goes beyond acknowledging difference as a mere appendage ('We are all the same underneath'), and which ensures that everyone's differences are not reduced to the same forms of trivial expression ('We all have a right to wear what we like')? To create this kind of space and then to explore its possibilities requires deeply committed individuals. If such dialogue is to evolve, people need to be able to offer their views in non-defensive ways whilst at the same time being open not simply to understanding the place of the other but to including the other within the scope for transformation.

6. Collaboration: Individuals, Groups and Organisations

If we are to develop the level and quality of dialogue needed for transforming the way in which we relate to each other as described in the previous chapter, where individuals have opportunities to both offer their own position as well as hearing that of others with openness, true collaboration is essential. Collaboration can take place in almost any human situation and in forum, at different levels for different purposes. This chapter highlights areas where collaboration is possible, the degrees and levels of collaboration that can occur, which need to be encouraged and developed as we move from 'I' to 'we'.

Broad areas of collaboration

As the table below illustrates, collaboration can take place in three key broad areas: between **individuals**; within and between **groups;** within and between **organisations**.

Table 2: Areas of Collaboration

Area of Collaboration	Qualities
1. Individual	One can initiate a call 'in the spirit of the way of things' and people will come and it will all 'work out' without any great effort. *Intention* has to be clear; integrity about the call unswerving; determination to put all one has available into the endeavour; sufficient awareness then to let go of the outcome and 'trust' in the process.
2. Group	A group can respond to a call that invites them to create the collaborative unity and participatory form that in turn creates a way of answering the call by practical action in the world.
3. Toward organisational collaboration	A group can sit together and await a call as they form into a collaborative entity of shared consciousness that is grown through their participation. An organising call may be required to bring them together and a question may be the initial focus, but the resulting responses are all to be worked out.

Within each of the areas described above, two degrees of collaboration can be identified. **First degree** collaboration is present when groups connect with one another or to a network, and see such a connection as a way of strengthening and enhancing their own work. **Second degree** collaboration occurs when those involved transcend their own focus but also include it, and the resulting synthesis, collectively, brings into being something that none of them could do alone.

These ideas are also linked to the entrepreneurial challenge of the times which is to consider the question, 'What can we do together that we can't do alone?' This is then followed by exploring first 'who', then 'what', before 'how'. The overriding question is, 'What do we need to learn to develop to the next level of organisational connectedness?'[5]

Levels of collaboration: contribution to co-creation

In moving to work with more fundamental questions of power and authority, Figure 3 below outlines a fuller representation of the deeper levels of *authentic collaboration*.
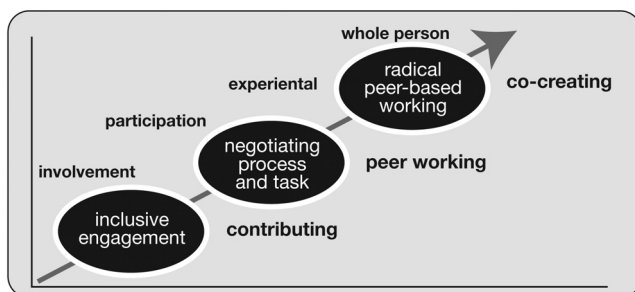

Figure 3: Spectrum of Levels of Collaboration[6]

1. First level collaboration; contributing: at this level people are working within their existing understanding of, for instance, their current roles. The people involved feel as though they are included and, indeed, may be asked to do things within a previously agreed framework. They can be seen to be *engaging* in a process.

At this level it is less possible to sit and watch a process unfold; there is a requirement to be engaged within it. Individual contributions are welcomed, and each has the capacity to influence the outcomes. This

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[5] The Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI) is one place where these questions are being lived and explored, see Chapter 14: Developing Globally Responsible Leaders.
[6] See *Working Relationships for the 21st Century: A Guide to Authentic Collaboration*, Oasis Press, 2010.

level of collaboration is increasingly common, although in some settings the degree to which it is genuine involvement, rather than having the appearance of involvement, can be questioned. In this first level, adjustments are possible and open to discussion.

Aspects of the positive skills and attitude of those involved in first level collaboration can be summarised as:

- Listening well
- Seeking deeper understanding
- Making links to others
- Wanting to contribute rather than control
- Willing to raise differences and value diversity
- Having the capacity to be clear about one's own thoughts without being dogmatic.

It is from experience in this form of inclusiveness that we have the possibility of moving into a more *participative* form of engagement i.e. working together as peers as we begin to question the paradigm itself.

2. Second level collaboration; peer working: this level begins to open up the dynamics at play in a way that enables those involved to begin to question the basis of the event they are entering.

As new learning emerges, there is the real possibility of changing the nature of the task being addressed. Even the way in which the task is addressed has the potential for change and the term participation is used to convey a greater sense of 'power with'. As the sense of 'peerness' increases, differences emerge along with the need to negotiate and work out more of the questions about 'how' we do this as well as 'what' we are doing.

Some of the aspects prevalent in this level are:

- Influencing beyond previously perceived boundaries and expected roles
- Willingness to face increasing levels of risk and conflict
- Engaging in both giving and receiving feedback
- The experiences shape next steps or the development of new questions and actions
- There is a more felt sense of honesty
- Managing the potential for defensiveness with more openness and vulnerability

- Emotional (affective) competence is more prevalent
- There is a growing sense of and expression of care for others
- Deeper questioning is more welcomed.

3. Third level collaboration; co-creating: as we become more and more open to working out what we are about, how we are to work together and just what the future is going to require of us, we become more and more *co-creators* of the work together i.e. using a more whole person approach.

Working with the whole person is an approach that seeks to bring together:

- The background of the context with an understanding of the nature of personhood
- Working in collaboration to enhance functioning toward the chosen goal
- Fostering and living out in practice a more responsible engagement with the nature of effective participation in the human order and the planetary sphere.

Individuals (when viewed as persons) have a right to play a part in those decisions which affect them, and it is this aspiration to an authentic collaborative process from a whole person perspective that immediately transforms the nature of the relationship between those involved. It becomes by its very nature an educational process.

In a whole person event, everyone stands together as joint creators of the educational or learning enterprise, each with different contributions but with contributions of *equal worth*. The educational endeavour then is not so much about participation as *authentic collaboration*; the *process* of the learning becomes every bit as much a source of learning as the content.

The aspects that are more fully alive at this level of collaboration include:

- Experience of greater levels of unknowing and the unknown with less fear and apprehension
- Increased sense of individual and mutual accountability
- Greater sense of interconnection
- Preparedness to bring all of oneself to the process
- Openness to giving and receiving
- Willingness to work with an emerging process that is, as a result,

more potent than any one of the individuals could offer, yet
interdependent on each of those involved

- Conflict is welcomed as an essential part of the emergent process
- Dialogue and conversation is experienced as a natural form of
human thinking.

The organisational dimension

The contemporary situation facing many people inside organisations is one of
great turbulence in many ways: hierarchy is breaking down; systems no longer
work reliably; roles are no longer a guide to action. In current circumstances
organisational life will increasingly come to rely upon shared *values and
relationships* that are well supported by opportunities for review and feedback of
an authentic kind. This is calling for forms of deeper collaboration than those
with which we are currently familiar.

Since it requires the organisation to address a new question, even if the
individuals themselves have reached a personal level of recognition, there is an
organisational task to complete before the organisation can (through its
representatives) embrace the proposed collaborative invitation. Individuals can't
commit the organisations they represent to a proposed collaboration as an
autonomous decision – they are accountable to their organisation. They know
they have to take the idea back to their wider body for support and agreement.

The difficulty is that organisations are still working within an existing paradigm
that is largely competitive, based on fear about the organisation's financial
security, and often fiercely protective of what they regard as 'their work' (which
earns their income), their identity, their position.

Organisations that make deals to co-operate with others often do so with the
intention, realised or not, of protecting themselves, and this restricts their
growth. Where deals are not made, the intention may well be to avoid
compromise at too early a stage and a need to maintain the integrity of the
organisations in the longer term. The result is that the desire to collaborate is
stalled because of less than perfect circumstances. Sometimes, too,
organisations avoid or refuse to make deals they could easily make because
they are much too vain about their own need to maintain their 'specialness'.

Organisations generally have lower consciousness than most of the individuals
working in them, so organisations have to grow to the point where they see they
can surrender to the larger opportunity of collaborating with others, without fear
of losing important aspects of their identity.

Organisational change is the crucible of the work of our time.

Aspects of transorganisational collaboration

The first step in convening the gathering and facilitating the process in transorganisational inquiry work[7] is when somebody who has the authority to commission sees the need for improved co-ordination, say, between organisations operating in the same sector (such as health organisations operating in the same geographical area). Secondly, this person invites others to participate in an inquiry and also hires an external facilitator (the facilitator and the convenor would usually need to be different in order to avoid any conflict of interest).

The composition of a group will be unique. Individuals may represent the thoughts and ideas of their host organisation (the one they are representing at the event) or they may not; they may be representatives of the organisation but not 'carry' the organisation's questions. Indeed, the organisation may not have any questions at this point, but is simply interested in the methodology as a way of supporting its evolution into new understanding. It may, in short, be trialling the method.

Individuals, even when they come consciously and intentionally representing questions held by the organisation, still have to manage the tensions between what they bring and what they find. In other words, the process of the inquiry may begin to influence them and skew them away from the questions that they came to explore, yet there is no point in entering an inquiry if you are not open to the influence of others around you – that is part of the joy and the labour of the whole process.

Individuals may explore different forms of understanding and develop potentially radically different forms of expression that may not yet be in keeping with the organisational perspective – if indeed they will ever be. Consequently, there is also a danger of the inquiry leaving the individual stranded at some distance from the organisation they came to represent.

My own view is that these are not unmanageable tensions or even conflicts of anything other than useful creative force – if they are surfaced, handled and explored from the outset.

Managing the process

The process needs to take these variations and concerns into account and manage them sensitively. Whether within one organisation or across several organisations, it is also true that organisational work by its very nature may cause cultural disruption to one degree or another within the organisational

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[7] Space2b, for example; research relating to the Cultural Olympics for 2012.

world. This is something those involved need to prepare for – or at least consider. Any cooperative inquiry type process needs to be approached with the ready expectation of having one's thinking, feeling and willing shaken up constructively and one's practice looked at with a great deal more detachment and critical subjectivity than is the norm.

The three elements to the process – the *call*, the *convening* and the *facilitation* of the process – also need thought. Frequently the call will not come from an individual or a facilitator pair, but will arise as a negotiated topic that has been suggested and explored by representatives of the participating organisation(s) that are potentially interested in taking part. It is not, therefore, the straightforward call of an individual and it needs a focus both in terms of its subject matter and, most importantly once the call goes out, also in terms of who is managing the responses the call generates in the lead up to the initial event.

It is unlikely to remain with the initiating group as a whole (who are likely to be scattered) and some form of co-ordination between the group and the initiating facilitator is essential to carry the impulse safely and with a developing understanding. The initiating facilitator must therefore know very clearly what the range of discussion has been that has led to the topic being put in the form in which it is stated. They, too, must 'own' it and be committed to introducing the inquiry approach through that subject matter. Alignment between the group and initiating facilitator is crucial.

This alignment is equally vital when convening the *gathering*, and by that I mean more than simply getting people into a room. I have in mind the whole initial phase of the inquiry which involves more than the initiating facilitator, since the arrangement and the development of the topic will need commentary and contributions from others as an introduction.

This, too, needs thought. Those who have been the behind-the-scenes developers need some due recognition and affirmation for the effort they have put in, yet not be seen in the light of *process managers,* nor should it be implied that they are now being upstaged by the 'expert' on hand to guide us all to victory.

The relationship between the facilitator(s) and the initiating group needs to be transparent and clear, and a minimum response would be something like care and appreciation reciprocated between both sides for when things get a little turbulent, as they surely will. Facilitators have a role to play in ensuring the group 'get' the stages and know where they are in the process so that they can, as smoothly and elegantly as possible, take over the management of their own life with a minimum of contributions from the facilitators themselves.

By this point in the process any underlying tensions between the facilitator and the initiator group will have begun to increase in the background and will become apparent as areas of potential difficulty as the inquiry unfolds. However well intentioned, if there is a significant difference between the initial group and the process that unfolds (that they have, in a sense, commissioned), then they may begin to look askance at the facilitator as a way of distancing themselves from the result they have helped bring about but to which they are not visibly connected in the way the facilitator is.

Managing dependency and transference in inquiry work is as strong as in any other form of group work and stronger than in some, since the aim is to move beyond it at the first realistic opportunity. If a group has helped to create an inquiry format that takes the members into some major areas of repressed distress, inchoate fear or archaic material, it can be accompanied by members withdrawing unless the initiating group stands by the process that will see everyone through to some more useful end than a collapse into mayhem.

This last fear is not so strong as perhaps I suggest, but it is present. The issue of *trust* between the facilitator(s) and the initiating group cannot be overstressed and is somewhat different from the way in which cooperative inquiries are more typically formed.

7. Collaboration and Engagement

"True inquiry is experiential. We aren't seeking to stop something from happening, for true inquiry has no goal other than truth itself. Inquiry can't be motivated solely by a desire not to suffer. The impulse not to suffer is understandable, but there is something else that must accompany genuine inquiry which is the desire and the willingness to see what is true." Adyashanti, *The End of Your World: Uncensored Straight Talk on the Nature of Enlightenment,* Sounds True, 2008.

Inquiry-based learning

The key question is: 'How does a whole person engage with other whole persons?'

The concept of collaborative learning and collaborative research is based on the idea of working *with* the other rather than *on* the other. It is, by its very nature, *inquiry-based learning* (the precursor of cooperative inquiry) and it is based on a number of underlying assumptions[8] about being with others in a learning (or indeed any other) enterprise:

- How can I help without diminishing your freedom in the process?
- How can I help in such a way that it does not attempt to fix you as if you were a broken mechanism?
- How can I help without hiding behind the role of being a 'professional' helper?
- How can I simply be with you where you are?
- How can I help without abstracting you from the context of your being, a vital and inextricable part of the whole world?
- How can I help without seeking some tangible or intangible reward for myself?

Inquiry-based learning is therefore a way of investigating the world as a way of learning about it, and doing it with others. There are a number of 'levels' of inquiry-based methods, each slightly different, but all aiming to work more or less at the edge of the participants' authenticity, as indicated in the figure overleaf.

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[8] These underlying assumptions are from the work of Robert Sordello.

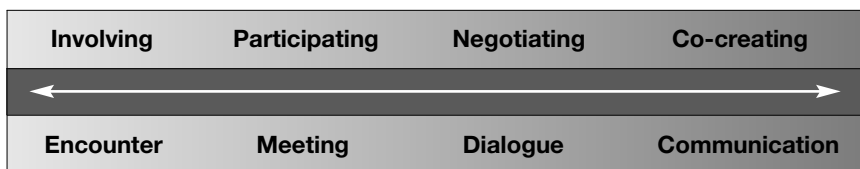| Involving	Participating	Negotiating	Co-creating
←			→
Encounter	Meeting	Dialogue	Communication

Figure 4: Action Inquiry Continuum

Inquiry-based learning starts from the working assumption that much of the personal world we live in overlaps with the social world that shapes and forms us, and that these two worlds are not separate in experience. They can, however, be discussed separately and it is possible to develop a way of thinking that overlooks the fact that these two different ways of *being in the world* are always spilling over into one another, subtly and sometimes crudely, each having an impact upon the other. Most 'study', however, is centred on the external, given, subject matter, or, at best, the accounts of those who have gone before about what there is to learn and therefore 'know'.

Inquiry-based learning also recognises that most of the questions that occupy people have not been answered before – by themselves at least. In addition, most of us have acquired the belief that what we think is not important, or that our personal understanding of the subject matter is not likely to be relevant to the inquiry we wish to make. Centuries of dogmatic repression places doctrine over personal experience and this leaves individuals believing they have to be told the nature of their experience by others who are 'experts'.

The starting point of inquiry-based learning – *the importance and validity of personal experience, the authentic expression of what one finds inside oneself in relation to the inquiry to hand* – is therefore strongly counter-cultural.

As individuals learn about inquiry-based learning methods, they may think that rigour and validity are overlooked in favour of, 'If this is my experience and it is authentic then that's enough.' But most people who persevere want to go far beyond the purely subjective response and seek to inquire into the meaning of the responses they have. They seek to evaluate the similarities and differences of their explorations against those of others and to share the tentative understanding and significance of what they are doing – something that can best be done in the company of others.

Out of such dialogue it may be possible to begin to describe the findings in a way that may be of use to others who have an interest in the topic area. However, such findings are not a way of exhausting the inquiry for others, merely offering learning to stimulate or to give some assistance.

Cooperative inquiry[9]

Cooperative inquiry is one of a number of participative, inquiry-based learning approaches to qualitative research (and perhaps the most radical). The key distinguishing feature of cooperative inquiry is that the emphasis is primarily upon *working together collaboratively* as a group and as individuals who may be pursuing their own area of interest on a theme that has drawn them together. Cooperative inquiry is particularly apt for:

- Working with difference
- Sharing power
- Building collaborative decision-making.

In this day and age, cooperative inquiry is a method that is *necessary*, not simply desirable. It enables individuals to develop the skills, understanding and emotional competence that promote a comprehensive appreciation of personal and organisational processes. Crucially, it is also a developing form of the exploration of human experience that fits well with the ethos of an organisation which is interested in looking at and developing new ways of working with people. In his book on the topic, John Heron described cooperative inquiry as:

> "… a form of participative, person-centred inquiry which does research with people not on them. It breaks down the old paradigm's separation between the role of researcher and subject." John Heron: *Co-operative Inquiry*, Sage, 1996.

In a cooperative inquiry, usually a person puts out a 'call' and individuals in their own right attend to work with the themes and questions that the call generates within them. Generally speaking, the initiator(s) of the call is the convenor of the gathering and the initial facilitator(s) of the process. This makes for a consistency of practice and process at the outset – something especially important if group members are inexperienced in the method.

Even so, those who are familiar with cooperative inquiry will know just how easy it is to stray from the process, get 'lost' or otherwise go awry as the momentum builds and the group is simultaneously creating, managing and processing the process!

The 'golden rule' to have in mind is that *once you don't know where you are, you are lost,* and when you are lost the best thing to do is to go back to the last point in the process when you knew where you were and work from there. That

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[9] The aim of this account is not to describe the rigorous methodology and process of cooperative inquiry in detail but to give the reader an overview of its aptness as a way of shared learning about socially relevant issues. For a fuller account of cooperative inquiry see John Heron: *Co-operative Inquiry*, Sage, 1996, and *A Guide to Inquiry and Experiential Research*, available from Oasis Press.

way you begin to spot how the process slips or your attention wanders, and you quickly realise that where *you* lost the plot is not necessarily the same place in the story that others did, and some haven't lost it at all and are simply waiting for you to catch up again.

This going back to the last point in the process is invaluable because it helps individuals learn how to maintain a thread of connection and to spot the moment when it goes. In short, it develops the rigour of staying 'with it' that is so much a requirement of cooperative inquiry.

John Heron's defining features of cooperative inquiry[10] are summarised in the box below.

1. All the subjects are as fully involved as possible as **co-researchers in all research decisions**, about both content and method, throughout all phases of the inquiry.

2. There is **intentional interplay between reflection and making sense** on the one hand, and **experience and action** on the other.

3. There is explicit attention to developing **appropriate validity procedures** for the inquiry and its findings.

4. There is a **radical epistemology for wide-ranging inquiry methods** that can be both informative about, and transformative of, any aspects of the human condition accessible to a transparent body-mind.

5. There are, as well as validity procedures, a **range of special skills suited to such all-purpose experiential inquiry**. For example, the level of affective competence of the participants needs to match the rigour of the inquiry itself.

6. The **full range of human sensibilities is available** as an instrument of inquiry.

Box 1: Defining Features of Cooperative Inquiry

Cooperative inquiry outcomes

There are four principle outcomes generated by cooperative inquiry:

1. **Transformations of being: presence.**

2. **Transformations of skill: practice.**

3. **Aesthetic patterns: presentation.**

4. **Written records: propositions.**

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[10] John Heron: *Co-operative Inquiry*, Sage, 1996.

Transformation of being is generally seen as the most important and most radical outcome, and is a distinctive feature of cooperative inquiry. In other words, the focus is not on learning about the self but on *transforming* the self.

Table 3: Outcomes of Cooperative Inquiry

Expression of Findings	Qualities
1. Transformations of being: presence	As a result of inquiry research and experience, the person is changed. Deep connections between personal learning and being-in-the-world are established and the individual is therefore in the world differently. This is one of the most potent forms of change. The radical impact is demonstrable, expressive, declared and lived out for all to see.
2. Transformations of skill: practice	Following an inquiry, a person can manage, express, or 'perform' with greater fluency, order or coherence than previously. They can embed their learning in forms of expression that were not previously possible or were of only limited complexity. Action in the world is informed, developed and enhanced by the research, which brings about notable shifts in action and performance.
3. Aesthetic patterns: presentation	Individuals, the inquiry group or a sub-group might give expressive form to their findings. This may be through acts of drama, dance, primary theatre or other ritual expression of the meanings arising out of their shared inquiry. The capacity to represent learning and understanding in ways other than formal data gives freedom for participants to find creative and expressive media that reflect the value of the insights gained and the learning achieved.
4. Written records: propositions	Finally, we come to the more traditional and conventional aspects of presenting and collating findings – the writing up and the conceptualising of the work that takes place with or without the thought of publication and wider circulation. Distributing texts, sharing understanding, and providing direct comprehensive and replicable accounts of the work may be part of a cooperative inquiry.

The 'we' world of dialogue and cooperative inquiry

'We' are facing many questions regarding 'our' future together. We need to engage in *dialogue* about this in ways that maintain mutual regard for the differences between us, yet reach that place where we can move forward – even if everyone does not agree with everything. Such a space would be a *safe space* and we all know how difficult it is to feel safe if one is open to challenge and disagreement based on unclear ground rules and where there are few guidelines to follow.

If we allow our differences (whether their meaning is fully understood or not) to hold all of us back, we all stand, potentially, to lose everything. This is not a crisis or a forecast; it is a reality. We also need – urgently – to appreciate what this means.

There is an increasing recognition that we do, indeed, need to promote more and better ways of creating dialogue. Dialogue that explores difference with a commitment to moving beyond it, but which also expressly acknowledges and includes it, is arduous, yet the need for just such a process is increasingly urgent. In order to engage in the type of dialogue required, we need to understand what we each mean in relation to what we regard as 'our problems', and not simply seek 'solutions'. This is dialogue that bridges differences without willing them away; it is dialogue that acknowledges differences without competing for one set of differences to triumph over another.

In short, we need to find a way of remaining 'we' without degenerating into competing factions, because the problems that we face are truly 'ours' and throughout this process the engagement of those involved needs to be purposeful, strong and committed.

Our problems are the result of living in an increasingly complex world where familiar structures and systems cannot be replaced fast enough to offer any of us comfort or certainty – however much we may crave it. More people are beginning to recognise the challenges we face are not to be solved by individuals, or even by select groups 'coming up with answers' for the rest of us. Expertise has its part to play, but since we are all part of the problem, we all need to find ways to engage in how we discover – together – something of the solutions that are needed.

This is a move to a 'we'-based form of personal change, social action, economic transformation, political engagement and ecological renewal. We cannot know *our* problems until we work out what 'we' agree about what those problems are. I cannot know what 'we' need without you joining in the dialogue about how you see the 'we' that 'we are'.

I cannot meaningfully commit to solutions that I know nothing of, that I have not participated in forming and that have implications of which I have no understanding. Similarly, I cannot with integrity encourage others to 'join' who have had no dialogue regarding the way forward and who thus remain disconnected from how 'we' might best begin to resolve these questions.

These are the *meta questions* about the position we are in and their influence on developing dialogue and participative approaches. There arises from this starting point an essence of a 'calling' to bring meaning into focus at many levels and to use it as a bond of connection.

8. From the 'I' to the 'We'

Levels of engagement in a 'we' world

When considering the shift of perspective from the 'I' to the 'we' dimension it is crucial to be aware that developed individuals – the 'I's of the equation – do not necessarily create a developed group – without effort. It is also the case that a developed group does not have to be dependent upon taking up, without question, the suggestions of 'developed' individuals who are recognised as having some form of externally authenticated and approved status, awareness and understanding (though such people often give out subtle claims that they know what needs to happen).

Power, authority and gender, along with the trivialities (by comparison) of status, bedevil any group aiming to move beyond conventional relations between its members and towards some form of embodied spiritual engagement between self, other and the Divine. The following table highlights a spectrum of groups based upon the degree of awareness and consciousness in how the group operates, and where power and authority lie and are manifested within the group. As we move along the continuum of groups, the subtleties of distinction may at first appear complex and difficult to discern, but it is these same subtleties that give form and the characteristic ethos to the groups at the 'we' end of the spectrum.

Table 4: Spectrum of Groups from 'I' to 'We'

1 Bunch	2 Conventional Group	3 Peer Group	4 Peer Learning Community	5 Creative Peer Learning	6 Self-creating Peer Community	7 Self-generating Peer Culture
Contributing			Peer Working			Co-creating

1. **The bunch**, the gang, the collection: the unformed, unmanaged (unmanageable) group of self-regarding 'unique' individuals. Persons acting out their own unaware views of 'how things are', 'how things should be' and competing to get their attention, control and intimacy needs met with little self-management.

2. **The conventional group** (with or without a conventional leader): the group as well-behaved, but wounded egos, that occasionally (or more frequently) 'lose it' and display unfinished business in all

manner of forms and who experience personal distress-laden reactions. Interpersonal conflicts usually arise out of unacknowledged transferential material as well as transpersonal inflation or deflation as the full weight of the numinous pours through the idealised longings for connection with the Divine.

3. **The peer group**: the facilitated, developmentally-intentional group. The group of persons now consciously and intentionally take responsibility for their own individually differentially-distressed patterns, but with agreed and contracted skilled facilitation they are busy unhooking the old wounds and cleaning up their distress-laden 'act' in order to free themselves to engage in *deep collaboration* with one another.

    Facilitation of the process at this stage is recognised and willingly agreed as an essential support system in order to release old wounds and tensions in safety and with skilled assistance. Distress-laden reactions may take any of the forms seen above but the difference here is that the skilled facilitator can move elegantly between catharsis to release personal distress patterns and interactive release of transferential material as well as suggesting aligned approaches for working with transpersonal distress. This is very different from the unaware acting out of fantasies and boundary-less appeals to the Divine.

4. **The peer learning community**: non-facilitated, mature persons working out their agreed purposes, tasks, methods and events by empowered, transparent, shared decision-making procedures. The skilled person is becoming *emotionally competent*: able to interrupt their own distress-distorted patterns; able to recognise their own interferences and transferential reactions; more readily able to take full responsibility for their contribution and their participation. They are equally able and willing to offer and receive facilitation from other members.

    There is no longer a dependent reliance upon the skills of a single facilitator. Emotional competence is now seen to move around the group, and the authentic call from one person to another, or from one individual about the group process, is much more evenly distributed. Encouragement and support for such challenges and the raising of issues of possible collusion, delusion and illusion are supported by such procedures as the *devil's advocate*. Regular process reviews and interpersonal clearing form part of the group's

life *de rigueur.* No one sees such time as unimportant or other than central to the need for emotional house-cleaning to enable the ritual space to be made 'clean' and prepared by agreed observances and practices.

5. **The creative peer community** is the advanced group of practitioners in the art of self-transformation working together with deep intentionality, collaborative awareness and transpersonal sensitivity to the nuances of their collective experience and its resonance with deeper signatures and intimations at the 'emerging edge'. With advancing practice, peers move beyond merely being persons-in-distress and hold increasing awareness and insight about their patterns, becoming more self-aware in interrupting the distortions and tensions that arise out of their personal history.

    As they do so, they liberate new areas of creative freedom and the constraints and inhibitions of their world hold less and less force. Practices are open to inquiry and review; new ideas are positively 'played' with and encouraged; ideology is held in a light and constantly examinable way; few rules remain and most practices have to be agreed in a decision-making process that is now much more lightly managed. There will still be the occasional major threshold issue, which they stumble over, since recognising where such thresholds lie is all but impossible to notice for a time. We are dealing with creating new awareness of *realities* (plural) here.

6. **The self-creating peer community**: the self-creating person with other self-creating persons is now taking their intentional, developmental evolution in tandem and in concert together with a rigour and depth of inquiry that is unequivocally committed to self-transfiguration of the human *with* the Divine. We are talking full-blown embodied spirituality in practice. As confidence increases with creative peers there is a gradual move to the self-creating community in which all features of the community's existence are affirmed in a much more internally committed way. Individuals no longer sign up to 'the rules' – even those they have developed.

    There is much more tolerance of what needs to happen and an openness to listen to the rationales provided for shifts and changes of practice. No source of authority is heard too frequently and the practice of 'authentic' hierarchy is well understood and recognised. Occasional departures into primitive forms of distress-patterned

behaviour are more easily noticed and more lovingly challenged. The group begins to feel as though it is living in a non-combat zone of peace and liberation – and begins to fear that it is deluding itself.

Only those unexpected challenges that arise from time to time, and the resulting interruptions, help the group to assess how far it really has arrived into this domain and how far it is kidding itself – *only long-term commitment to working things out together* brings this state of affairs about. (Versions may be possible in shorter meetings, but that is more akin to enjoying a dinner party and confusing it with thinking we all could live together as a community of peers.)

7. **The self-generating peer culture**: the aware exercise of collaborative practices constantly open to review, modification and amendment in the light of emerging realities and experiences by a group of internally committed persons. They choose their locus of interest and their capacity for engaged collaboration as the most extreme form of crucible for learning of their divine purpose in enacting their peer collaboration with the Divine.

9. Implications for Social Action Organisations of Tomorrow

"Everything you see around you is the consequence of someone having an idea." Mario van Boeschoten

Responding to new demands

In a product-driven world it is necessary to remind ourselves that we are led by ideas. Without clear conceptual frameworks we will not make the kinds of progress necessary to meet the demands of the times we are living in, with the breakdown in institutional arrangements and an unprecedented withdrawal of interest in conventional political action. This is not simply a time of change but of major transition from one social era to another. However the contours of the new are not yet apparent. We are, therefore, looking into something far-reaching, thus raising the question, 'How do we want our organisations to respond to the changing tasks that are before them?' Some of the tasks include:

1. The need to recognise the value of **inclusivity and diversity.** How can we begin to reconcile them at a higher order/level of organisational life?

2. Finding a balance between the *entrepreneur* – the bringer of technical, social and economic progress – and *leadership* that **develops the craft of leadership** with values that appeal to the new concerns.

3. Outlining the map of a new form of leadership that goes beyond protecting corporate interests to the exclusion of other factors. One that can respond and work with growing forms and that can embrace the value of **liberating greater creativity**.

4. Finding ways to move our attention away from administering and holding things, and more toward **freeing the talents of people**.

5. Outlining more clearly the necessity for developing a **new sense of connection** at higher levels of organisational life.

We could begin to think of *statesmanship* as more than a political force and one that has wider application. How and where, for example might we find corporate statesmanship? And what models and what examples do we have or can we design? If so many of current corporate social responsibility (CSR) arrangements are based on managing risk-avoidance and are more compliance-directed:

1. How do we increase the **courage and the adventurousness** needed to be more innovative on the scale required?

2. How do we encourage greater forms of **voluntary accountability** so it moves beyond economic action to include wider planetary concerns?

3. How do we find ways to encourage social enablers and political influencers to find common cause and become more **mutually engaged** with an agenda for the benefit of all?

Developing 'thought leadership'

With time at a premium, decisions are taken swiftly, made operational at once and the results are soon seen. In developing new thought leadership, the pace cannot hope to compete with those who call for 'more of the same'. Thoughts that are stimulating, new and also well considered need time for their exploration and development. We have to 'get off the bus to nowhere' and think through more reflectively the 'how' as well as the 'why' and the 'what' of any new thinking.

There is tremendous pressure on organisations to capitalise on good ideas and to implement them as programmes for change and action, but with change of the scale and nature we are considering here, we must resist the urgency of action until our thinking is sufficiently ordered and the implications, at least to some degree, have been surfaced. This is not a council of perfection but a warning against over-enthusiastically recasting social, political and economic relatives into some utopian programme.

There has to be not only a change of mind but a change of heart. The challenge here is to create a useful framework that goes beyond the current priorities and interests of most established players and the instrumental priorities of most institutional concerns – in practice. In order to make progress, we need to recognise that thinking with the tools we currently use will only help us build the kind of vehicle we currently have or, at best, modify it.

Many of the tools we can use to evolve our thinking are familiar to us. It is their rigorous and dedicated application, given the demands on our time, which will influence their capacity to bring the issues to light. Discovering what works 'here' and to what degree – expecting and accepting the partial and the progressive rather than the revolutionary in our learning – is important.

The challenge

New thinking needs time and dialogue to develop it, and reviewing the thinking in the light of application is a continuous endeavour for those committed to it. This is about debate: listening to a wider range of actors, which, in turn, leads to a greater form of engagement with wider social issues. It is an important part of the emerging consciousness, not simply lobbying for sectional interests; it is political engagement for the 'social good', not sectional advantage. Taking a global perspective and working with the global dimension is not familiar to most of us and we need to discover where we can find useful assistance.

The aim is to create a form of thinking that understands it is possible to find a place in a transformed economic world and still make a sufficient profit – one that is based not on greed and 'I'/'me'/'mine'.

This outlines a new agenda that goes well beyond the current requirements of the existing model for everyone – as individuals and within organisations. It would be an invaluable aid to outline what would help and in what order some of those themes need to be tackled, and describing how to go about attempting to respond to some of these crises within individual organisations or group structures would provide helpful 'real time learning'.

We do not need comprehensive philosophical descriptions (though they have their place). We are looking for thought leadership that gives bold direction to assist those who are attempting to explore new forms; for new practices and new ways of working.

Section Three
The Global Dimension

10. Planetary Citizenship

If not now – WHEN?
If not us, then WHO?

Think Big – Start Small – Act Now[11]

Never leave a meeting without a commitment to action
First WHO – then WHAT– then HOW and always WHEN

Planetary Citizen: beginnings

I first heard the term 'Planetary Citizen' in a conversation with John Heron in 1991 or so. At the time I thought the phrase 'poetic' and somewhat grand so I did not take it too seriously. (What did I know! But I was soon to learn.) John's journeys between New Zealand and his home near Volterra in northern Italy, and my visits to him there each year for over a decade (for week-long peer life-review sessions) were the occasions when the idea of what it meant to lay claim to be a Planetary Citizen began to take hold.

I came to realise through those conversations how John expressed in his own life what the demanding commitment of being a Planetary Citizen implied. As I came to understand it, it was to be *for* and to be unequivocally *for*; it was subtle and above all it was comprehensive. It meant being *for* the most intentional form of self-directing, self-creating and self-transfiguring form of living of which he was capable. My first example of a Planetary Citizen offered me a very high order of example and vocation, should I seek to follow.

At first I took it to mean that to be a Planetary Citizen was no more than to have a generalised impersonal care for the planet, and, in that sense, weren't we all Planetary Citizens? Well, I knew right away that I wasn't. To have a care for the planet as a whole was altogether outside my scope of action, or so I thought. It was as though, dare I say it, the planet was worthy of being considered as a living being that I, personally, had some stewardship and some responsibility toward, and that I had some role to play in its progress and evolution.

John, demonstrably, was such a figure. He was not merely a 'citizen of the world' i.e. someone able and willing to move around the cultures and peoples of the world as an equal – he was already that when first I met him over 25 years before – but he was truly planetary in his perspective on what was taking place upon the Earth. This did not mean, of course, that no event passed him by or

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[11] This phrase and call to action comes from the thinking of the ForeSight Group: www.foresight.se

that he laid claim to some kind of omniscience about the destiny of the planet of which he was a citizen. It did mean, however, that he regarded being *here*, *as an embodied being*, required a commitment to engage with planetary concerns, issues and potentials in full measure.

For John, being a Planetary Citizen was no more than being grown-up and playing a part in the circumstances which framed his life.

Elements of Planetary Citizenship

Being a Planetary Citizen links a number of concerns together. First, I have to be *citizen of somewhere:* I have to *belong* to something – be signed up to a realm in which my 'being a citizen' has meaning. In belonging I have to have a notion of what it involves to belong: I need some *rights* to protect my involvement along with the *obligations* that go with being a citizen, and those rights aren't a lot of use if I can't practise them. I need *arenas*, 'spaces', to participate in, using my citizenship to influence the world around me.

So, it seems to me, the Planetary Citizen has to have a *concern for the planet as an entity* – a living entity – along with a commitment to *global justice* and *support for the human rights* that complement the right to participate in the decisions which affect us. And, of course, some of our fellow Planetary Citizens are a long way from enjoying those conditions. Very many of us don't yet live in stable societies and many don't have established human rights, yet without these you cannot find places to exercise your right to participate freely.

These conditions – the minimum – are what many political pressure groups, social action organisations and NGOs are bravely striving to create across the world. As they succeed, the political 'space' becomes freer and the opportunities to work together to create a truly Planetary order increase.

The 'work' of the Planetary Citizen

A Planetary Citizen is therefore someone who is working to enlarge the space and the scope of human action, taking into account the structures and the conditions that limit human possibilities. Through their direct engagement they begin to realise that the *state of the planet* is also part of that concern.

Out of a deep commitment to reform or radicalise the human order, we are soon confronted by the deep injustice and exploitation that goes on, not only between peoples but in the way we treat 'nature' and the world around us.

It cannot, therefore, be long before the Planetary Citizen begins to find themself engaged with questions that concern not only, 'How are we to live together as one human order?' but, 'How are we to live alongside the species with whom

we share the biosphere?' These are species that, until recently, we regarded as simply there for our use and to whom we owed no responsibility, but, as we are discovering at an alarming rate, the more we disregard our fellow beings upon the planet the more we endanger ourselves.

Einstein pointed out that the loss of bees would render the Earth uninhabitable for humans within 50 years; we already have a crisis of bees. This one example could be multiplied many, many times as we recognise that the condition of the planet and ourselves is dependent upon a healthy proliferation of life forms. Many of us are also realising that the loss of any species is a loss of something we can never regain – it is a permanent break with our role as stewards of 'life on Earth'.

The Planetary Citizen is one who is engaged with the question of ecological balance and environmental concern.

For many people, other questions are brought alive through either the attempt to improve the lot of our fellow human beings or a concern for the depletion of the resources of the Earth and the species that live on it. These questions take us to the very essence of meaning:

1. How are we to make sense of the role and purpose of the human existence in times of such desperate difficulty and challenge?

2. What do our times say of our legacy from the great traditions and religions of the past about the place and role of faith, beliefs and worship? Of, in short, the *sacred* in our lives?

Are we now so 'grown-up' that these questions no longer have force, as some suggest? Are we simply a bunch of cosmic voyagers on a faraway island of life in a galaxy that is one of millions, our presence of no account? Is there no more to our 'appearance' than simply a minor accident in the cosmic unfolding that happened to produce life in this form?

As our conditions get more straitened, as the challenges deepen and the timescale shortens, we are in danger of reaching for the safety of cynicism or the opportunity for flight into naïveté and misplaced hope. It is difficult to know how to be 'grown-up' and what being 'grown-up' might mean in the face of the plight that surrounds us, but whilst the appeal of past faiths in contemporary western societies is declining, the search for existential meaning is not.

As economic conditions get more fragile and the economies of the 'developed' world begin to feel the contraction of recession, will it bring about a questioning

of the consumerist lifestyle that has been at the centre of economic 'progress' for over 25 years? Will the social dislocation of increased unemployment bring about a greater degree of fraternalism in our relations with one another, or will it only serve to divide even further those who have from those who have not?

The gathering agenda

Planetary Citizens cannot be immune to such issues and would not seek to be; rather, they are likely to be painfully aware that these are issues that cannot be solved 'intellectually' or alone. If we are to progress at anything like the rate that is needed, we require a *community of practice:* a group of likeminded folk (not of similar mind in understanding, but of like mind in their desire to pursue their questions rigorously) to begin to work out some of the possibilities and strategies to develop them.

Traditional religion may no longer thrive, but certainly the need for a place to explore and express our reverence, our understanding, of the cosmic order is unlikely to diminish. The return to a sense of the *numinous*, the sacred or the reverence for life that has been a hallmark of all cultures in the past, is likely to be rediscovered. Without it our materialistic consumption-based economies are likely to leave people deeply unsatisfied, particularly as there are fewer and fewer goods easily available to consume.

The Planetary Citizen is one who has a care for the role of 'meaning', for sacralising our efforts and celebrating the journey, otherwise we stand to be solemn, worthy, but ultimately humourless drones 'doing good' for fear of doing anything else. And most of us know that 'doing good' is neither a creative nor an expressive form of our potential or our human inheritance; it is born ultimately out of fear of being judged inadequate, unsuitable and even unworthy. Such a puritanical form of enslavement to the 'right' idea is not part of the Planetary Citizen's commitment, which has to be based on a much more joyously expressed concern to see life flourish and us as part of it.

11. Growing Gatherings

From the 'I' to 'we' to 'all of us'

In the last 35 years we have seen an increasing concern with the relational dimensions of humanistic practice: from the 'I – you' of the first phase (with its emphasis upon individual learning within a group setting) to the 'I – we' dimension of inter-subjective understanding with its particular contribution to transpersonal (spiritual) exploration. We have also seen major growth in and development of humanistic ideas in relation to creativity, the emergence of new forms of practice, organisational questions, and the application of humanistic principles to organisational structures in rapidly changing times.

As the pace of change has increased, the critique of current norms that humanistic practice offers to the basic elements of human interaction have all deepened through practice, including for example:

- Its questioning of race, gender and class inequalities
- Its questioning of power relations and the promotion of conjoint decision-making in complex endeavours
- Its critique of hierarchical forms of authority.

Gatherings

If we are to learn together and if we are to learn different things in different ways – because the situation demands we look, we think, we approach our situation in a new light – then we need to have new ways of coming together. We should set about finding out what they are.

People have gathered together in ways that have been rich and powerful, productive and celebratory, for as long as they have found one another, and for as long as groups, tribes, clans have had reason to meet to celebrate the seasons, the hunt, the harvest, the wedding and the wake.

At all such festival times people learn. They don't necessarily set out to learn in instrumental ways in the way we do when we attend our conferences, but they learn. Gathering together is about passing on the old ways, or keeping up-to-date with the changes; of hearing the gossip and creating memories that will sustain us through the dark times, the winter season or simply the next phase of wandering.

Gathering together is a form of *food for the soul*; an enrichment of the imagination and a deep calling all peoples seem to share. It is a form of replenishment as well as communion. As one person suggested, 'We need to

learn to dance in the space between', and that would be another way of expressing the spirit of this piece. We don't need more knowledge, we need more:

- Humanity (a less abrasive[12] word for the term 'love')
- Conjoint understanding
- Committed engaged participation together
- Investigative experiential exploration
- On the edge 'here and now' research about who and where we are as *us* – now, at this time and together.

A number of new ways of working together have been developed.[13] They go by different terms and accomplish different things including such ventures as World Café, Café Spirituel, Open Space, action learning, cooperative inquiry, appreciative inquiry. They all involve more of the person, whether the person is in a small group (World Café) but part of a larger crowd, or working with large crowds and helping them find common interests, as in Open Space.

Not one of us will know what the new ways are to be, for they will depend upon the kind of question that brings us together, the kind of issue we want to respond to or the situation that requires us to frame joint action – but *some of us together could begin to find out*.

Finding a new way
If we are to learn together and view learning much more as an exploratory and tentative series of steps towards deeper understanding, rather than seeking out the 'answer' and feeling a matter is settled, then we have to have different ways of approaching how we share the learning that we gain.

Recent experiences have brought this issue vividly alive to me. The first occasion was discovering that two organisations, each of which is aspiring and committed to promoting spiritual awareness and insight, were busy organising conferences that overlapped and even competed with one another, and, as a result, one failed to take place because of a lack of take-up. There were two aspects of this that took my attention:

1. How could people knowingly compete in such a way as to ensure that an event had to be abandoned?

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[12] It may seem paradoxical to use 'abrasive' as a description of love but, in practice, how many of us can love enough to work out our conflicts, let alone resolve them?
[13] At Oasis they are reflected in such practices as full circle, cooperative inquiry, learning space and authentic collaboration.

2. Why not combine them into one or... There were other responses than simply to keep on going, surely?

But something deeper than that was at work in me to do with the notion of conferences *per se*. Conferences to explore spiritual or, indeed, any other kind of experiential or participatory learning, seemed to me to be an increasing anachronism. Surely for these areas of learning and experience we are well past the conference with its formality, its competitive style and its single sole presenter? Not altogether, but very largely. There are many things we are now learning in participatory approaches that simply cannot be communicated effectively by reportage or the recitation of data. These may give some quantitative indicators and provide data but the 'felt experience' is not held there, as we know.

Conferences are only part of what is required. We have too many and we need to do something new, so the conference has an honourable place, but it is no longer likely to be the font of… which is how I think it is often regarded. It is not likely to be the place where those pioneering new forms of learning together are at ease, or even have any great enthusiasm for, because learning in community requires community and you don't get that in a conference, however much you claim it. Something wider, and even wilder, seems required; something a little messier and a little less ordered.

Towards active citizenship

Educational practice is changing rapidly, and institutional pressure to respond to new influences, to manage differently, to organise in new ways, to revise and reform, is already underway in many parts of the globe. In addition, knowledge has a decreasing life span, thus *learning how to learn* under such rapid waves of change becomes the key skill. This follows on from knowing that one *can* learn (as in one is able to learn), knowing that one has a *right* to learn (as in one has an entitlement to educational opportunity), and that one learns in one's own ways (as in the ways people learn are highly individualised and these ways are to be encouraged, valued and provided for). The right of the learner to be considered in the learning relationship thereby increases.

Such understanding restricts the hierarchical authority of the teacher as the source of knowledge and the reference for practice. Many teachers and scholars readily admit that their thinking lags behind practice, and that by the time research is written up and published it is often superseded by practice on the ground. These kinds of developments present new 'problems' for the value and the dissemination of knowledge as well as for the position of the teacher as transmitter of values and custodian of social norms, which are implicit parts of the role in more traditional societies.

Sources of new knowledge are no longer restricted to centres of higher learning: think-tanks, research groups, practice-based consultancies, NGO research efforts and professional development groups all contribute to the ideas and the thinking in many forms of 'work'. This calls the very idea of the 'university' into question and undermines the safe sense of stability that traditionally has been a cornerstone of the institution of higher learning.

Entrepreneurial skills (if they are such) are avowedly promoted[14], certainly in the UK and in Europe, as a means of liberating the potential of more people to create their contribution to the existing pool of available 'work'. How far this will succeed and under what conditions people learn to become successful entrepreneurs, albeit in limited ways, is far from clear. But the encouragement for citizens to bring a more creative aspect of themselves to their working life is to be welcomed as a sign that the expectation that work will be repetitive, predictable, and thereby boring, is fast disappearing in many workplaces. However, this is not to miss the point that there is an ever-increasing number of poorly paid, part-time roles that are all those things – boringly repetitive and deadening to the core.

The above point raises an overarching dimension to the question of professional education: 'What role and what preparation do we provide for the education of the person as citizen?'

It is curious that the system upon which most business schools and most corporate organisations are founded provides so little appreciation for how the citizen is the forerunner of the professional, or how the continuance and wellbeing of the societal world is a precursor for and underpins the contribution of professionals and others. It is assumed that people are already conversant with what it means to be a citizen and how to act as a citizen, yet, as we know only too well, this is not always the case. We need to promote active citizenship, build upon it and not assume it is present when, in large measure, it isn't.

Without a satisfactory form of active citizenship (and we are not thinking simply of a curriculum here), professional education rests upon little beyond its own appeal to instrumental results. In other words, 'Do this and do that because it has this result.' This is an appeal to limited values and ethical practices purely because this is what is currently 'allowed', and it almost always ensures that the norm is a compliance-based model and a risk-avoidance approach.

Only when citizens are educated to have a care and an interest in their wider

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14 However, some would argue that government, with its considerable 'red tape' and bureaucracy, suppresses rather than promotes entrepreneurship.

world, and know how to engage with it effectively, will professional education be moderated by the expectations of social concern. Until then even the addition of greater time spent on ethical aspects of business practice will have limited scope for effectiveness.

This disconnect between the citizen and public life – the reduction of the citizen to almost passive consumer and/or producer – is common in many western democracies, and gives professional education and corporate doctrine its immense and largely unchallenged influence. Apathy is both the enemy of change and also its greatest ally. Where there is considerable apathy, much can be accomplished by a few with little reference to the wellbeing of all, whilst with an active citizenship, change would be more fiercely contested. Although no doubt too slow for some, it would be much more likely to take into account the wellbeing, or at least the considerations, of all as well as the future.

Our interest in the urgency of action often leads us away from any reference to the fact that some things still need time and that they are worth taking the time required. Losing competitive advantage in the race to self-destruction sadly means we all stand to be losers, yet the need to slow down is itself urgent when we think of some of the innovations that are being introduced into the global market with little thought for their long-term effects.

12. The Process of Culture Change

Changing a Culture

Culture isn't only the rules – it is much more than that; it is the world in our heads. If we are to succeed, do we need to take the culture we have with us or do we leave it behind in favour of another one?

Culture change is the domain of organisational development[15] (OD). OD takes a more developmental view of its contribution and works in ways that are in contrast to its big brother, management consultancy. A typical management consultancy approach, with its structuralist blueprint, has young, well-briefed and highly gifted individuals arriving to find the most suitable means of applying *their* 'know how' to your reality. In contrast, as one OD practitioner described it:

> "OD is not about 'injections', but about building processes together, starting where people are, helping them to find their own questions, and helping them to transform their questions. It is about addressing the whole human being and the organisation, structure, process, identity, relationships. This is a complex, challenging task."

OD implies within it some possibility of sustainability and health rather than a one-off intervention or programme. It emphasises the importance of wakefulness and attentiveness to what is taking place and the courage to play a part in bringing about new states of affairs responsibly. At its heart, it is the work of raising consciousness in oneself and in others who are part of the situation in order to provide greater freedom and, therefore, more life-enhancing choices for all involved.

Development is a more collaborative process and has to begin with a question that comes from inside those who are seeking to change. In this way, development arises out of a *relationship* and not by one party imposing change upon another; it is an expression of the warmth and commitment of all involved to work together to realise something new from their exchanges.

The change agent may bring tools and ideas from elsewhere (and they have their place) but more than anything else, they bring their interest, their warmth and their dedication to inviting others to find their questions. The

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[15] OD is the discipline by which people endeavour to promote organisational health through creating and applying processes which bring about the desired balance of organisational structure, systems and ways of working so as to enable the organisation to meet its aims.

change agent has a distance from the realities that can lend itself to the making of some simple observations and to the raising of some unconsidered options. This relationship of un-invested interest is a great aid because it can act like a mirror to the client so they are able to see themselves more clearly and hence have more choice available to undertake the work they identify as needed.

Such work is uncomfortable and disturbing because it invites shadows to appear and hidden forces to surface, and those undertaking it imply they are willing to meet their shortcomings. This is an inevitable feature of such work. Those involved have to feel enough care to be supported through the unsettling experience of having to face some unpalatable home truths, and to feel 'held' enough to meet those things in themselves and the situation that they have managed to avoid or delay.

Without a degree of curiosity about what is taking place, there is little likelihood of deep, long-term change arising. And we know only too well from experience that, when pressure builds and a crisis is imminent, the mental space for considering options is least available: tunnel thinking, deterministic reflexes and the fixed view prevail.

This makes the 'entry' and the negotiating of agreements about the work to be done a critical phase. It is not simply a matter of agreeing the contract, something much more influential is taking place – a relationship is being tested for its potential to hold through the tough times ahead.

A model for culture change
Deep culture change isn't something to undertake lightly or with little in the way of preparation. If we recognise that recasting the purpose of the corporation is a necessity, that transforming the way business education is offered is required and that deep culture change is an essential means to make progress, we have to give much thought to the 'how' and to what is involved.

This is in contrast to the toolkit approach of many management texts and case study examples of fast turnaround, speedy transformational reinventions. These do happen and do succeed, but the question is at what cost and to whom? And further, what might such examples have to teach us in the work that we are considering? There is a great risk of finding an example of an approach that has had great success and then applying it to another situation quite unlike or not sufficiently like the one that had such success, rather than digesting the learning and finding what might fit the unique situation we are entering.

It is worth being aware from the outset that the model of change we endorse will need to be consistent, well articulated and held to if it is not to be part of the expert-led, imposed solution of the more familiar model. There is no place for some hybrid or blend of both. They step out of different traditions and come from different ways of understanding the nature of the person and the nature of the organisation.

We have to describe the kind of model that will accomplish the scale of change that we are outlining both for the corporation of tomorrow and the business school. We have to recognise that we begin where they are and we have to work with what we are offered. The model thus needs to be adaptable to a variety of circumstances and conditions. It needs to have the complexity of reaching the most sophisticated situations and the simplicity of being understandable to just about anybody who is to be involved – no easy task.

It is in outlining our model and building its expressions and applications together that we will learn what we will have to face elsewhere. None of us can have the answer, but all of us can make a contribution to developing the sophisticated understanding that is needed. Many of us have experiences that illustrate aspects of what the change process needs to take into account and what the change agent needs to bear in mind. We are not starting with nothing – we have plenty of resources; they are simply not organised to do the work we now have ahead of us.

This leads to a further caution – hurrying to change the world before changing ourselves. Most of us involved in change agent work know that experience only too well. In our enthusiasm to bring about results, we subtly take over or suggest strategies that will 'do this' or bring about 'that' and leave the client behind a little breathless, but all too willing, finally, to have an answer provided.

Dutifully, they introduce the suggested strategy with only a partial understanding of the implications and without having asked all the questions that might have made their lot easier and then... We find the situation is little improved and often made more difficult, leaving both ourselves and the client demoralised. The depth of change we achieve will depend on an educational awareness and not an information-giving approach since change has to move both ways: one party neither driving it nor suffering it but working in collaboration together. It is a *process* not a series of events, and engagement and management are required to steer the process or nothing useful will happen.

Elements in the change process

The Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI)[16] has outlined five significant elements to the kind of change process that would be needed for transformative learning to become a reality and they are used as the basis for this section.

1. **Involving**: it is important to involve a broad range of key stakeholders to create a favourable climate for change. This may take more time than we would like, but it is painstaking and necessary preliminary work. It is necessary to understand both the forces *for* and *against* change, and to identify potential allies as well as those forces most resistant to the prospect of deep culture change. Key players need to be identified and engaged with – their reservations and difficulties understood and strategies to help them manage devised before anything as grand as a 'plan' is proposed.

2. **Influencing**: most of us still live in a corporate world where influence derives from position, and position is related to power. In this exercise, we have no such power and so the appeal is to something other than compliance or the claim of 'necessity', or 'because I say so'. We have to win the argument and create opportunities to influence those bodies that grant a measure of legitimacy to those we are working with, whether it be in corporate life or in the business school.

   "These might include accreditation bodies, the business school rankings/ratings, media, students, recruiters and corporations. It is also important to work closely with the student clubs engaged in corporate responsibility issues, such as the 'Net Impact' clubs in an ever increasing number of schools." Philippe de Woot

   A key change agent strategy in devising an approach to major change is to *map* the range of key players and explore where the greatest impact can be accomplished with the least effort. There are simply too many influences to hope even to contact them all, let alone carry them all with us. Working with our allies and forging alliances that make common cause with those who hold similar ambitions is crucial.

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[16] See *A Call for Engagement* (EFMD, 2005), the GRLI's first report. The GRLI was founded by the United Nations Global Compact and the European Foundation for Management Development. It is a unique partnership between global companies, business schools, and centres for leadership and learning focusing on how to develop a next generation of globally responsible leaders.

3. **Inspiring**: the greater the call, the greater the 'ask' of those involved, the more important it is that the direction and the destination align with their aspirations. In each case, we are seeking major change of *others*, however much we ourselves are included. We are putting to others the need for change on a major scale, and they will only collaborate and play a full part if they see its value. They have to be convinced of the need and the case, and, equally, they will need the time and the opportunity to see their contribution as fitting *their* view of *their* future.

    Our view of *their* future will not inspire them and their current view of their future may not sustain them. When a change of world view is required, waiting for others to realise it may be unrealistic yet imposing it is sure to fail. Persuasion of an engaged kind is needed and many of us are not very skilled at such dialogue.

    We know the case well, we have understood the need for change and all too often we seek to offer the same case to others in the belief and hope it will make the same sense to them. The question of finding the inspiring approach is not readily obvious.

    > "As the educators of the next generation of globally responsible leaders, business schools have an opportunity to inspire other stakeholders (including other business schools) to adopt globally responsible leadership thinking and practice. One way to do this is to incorporate it into statements of mission and vision. Another valuable approach is to adopt citizenship behaviours and to lead by example and inspire others." Philippe de Woot

4. **Internalising**: if we want to encourage a way of thinking and doing that reflects the essential elements of *globally responsible leadership* we should perhaps begin with making clear our sense of what *globally responsible practice* consists.

    We are not all leaders, but we are all practitioners and we can all make that practice more aligned to *globally responsible values*. The more we do that and uncover what it requires and demands of us, the more we will be able to work effectively with others from a position of **experiential understanding** rather than theoretical expectation.

    At its heart, we are encouraging a model of planetary citizenship amongst our communities of practice, whether in business and

commerce or in institutions of education. From a practice base and an engaged expression we begin to internalise the values that we are seeking to encourage others to adopt. In doing so we will also experience the internal conflicts and dissonance of some of the choices that confront us, thereby making us more empathic of similar difficulties that others experience.

We can only begin to learn what it means to 'live our practice' by recognising that we are all in this together; though not all in the same place or in the same way or at the same time, yet all constructively doing what we can to engage with the issues as they arrive in our lives.

5. **Interconnecting**: beyond finding allies where we can, there is a need to seek connections in ways that can create synergies of effort and greater impact. Where you are and what links you have will determine the next best step that makes sense of the situation as you encounter it. Prescriptions for change at an individual level rarely work and when they do they rarely last. We are more likely to have an impact if we find the points of leverage that will gain greater flexibility and more responsiveness and build up a more robust response for the future.

> "Business schools have many opportunities to work in partnership with business, government and local NGOs. Their perspectives can help break the mould of 'the single thought' and develop innovative projects and ideas that demonstrate globally responsible leadership. Along the way, such projects can (and should) also gain favourable publicity. By beginning with a panoramic view of the world rather than a narrowly functional view, business schools will engage with the process of creating globally responsible leaders rather than efficient managers." Philippe de Woot

There are a number of implications of transformative learning[17] for organisations and institutions. In the case of business schools this includes outlining the rationale and exploring the new balance needed between entrepreneurship, leadership and statesmanship. In addition, educational institutions will need to develop an awareness of the paradoxes and ambiguities of globally responsible leadership and define the priorities for the 21st century. This will entail changing their ideology, developing more of a Whole Person Learning approach and developing not only managers, but leaders.

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[17] See Appendix 1 for a description of the process for initiating a project in transformative learning.

13. Developing the New Paradigm

"Banish the word 'struggle' from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration. **We are the ones we've been waiting for**." Orabi, Hopi Nation, Arizona

Whole Person Learning

Whole Person Learning[18] evolved over the years of developing humanistic approaches to learning, and in that process a number of essential building blocks (see the table below) have been developed and identified. Whilst many of these tenets are also referred to in other approaches (which often draw widely upon the humanistic legacy) few promote the holistic impulse rigorously and congruently in the way Whole Person Learning enterprises do. These building blocks are cornerstones for encouraging the growth of collaborative learning, the development of dialogue, and for moving beyond the 'I' and 'we' to 'us'.

Table 5: Cornerstones for Collaborative Learning and Development

Cornerstone	Features
The Oasis Seven Stage Model of Human Relations[19]	The model offers a narrative overview of the stages of relationship and the key skills involved at each stage.
A humanistic perspective	The growth and development of the person as an integrated living form that responds holistically – mind, body, soul, spirit.
Biographical understanding	The application of a biographical understanding to the themes and topics of an individual, group or organisation in process.
Growth, change, development and transformation	A framework for understanding the nature of and differences between processes of growth, change, development and transformation.
Developing a world view	Understanding the idea of a dominant paradigm and the notion of *paradigm shifts* that individuals pass through if they experience sufficient turbulence and upheaval.
The self-as-instrument concept	A person's main resource is themselves. The greater their self-awareness, the more effective they will be.

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[18] See *Learning for Tomorrow: Whole Person Learning*, Bryce Taylor, Oasis Press, 2007.
[19] See *The Elements Series: The Seven Stage Model for Effective Working Relationships,* Oasis Press, 2011.

The Temperaments	A familiarity with individual temperaments helps individuals 'plot' many of their blind spots and 'no go' areas.
Humanistic approaches	Openness to wider approaches that come from the humanistic field is encouraged.
The learning cycle	A deep awareness of the importance of the learning cycle to embrace the *co-creative* potential of *collaborative inquiry* and *cooperative inquiry*.
Contracting in learning	The importance of contracting as a 'live' experience that sets the tone for the method, the process and the sequence of what takes place.
Engagement	Whole Person Learning needs the engagement of all members throughout the life of an event – something that is not familiar to many learners at the outset.
Group work	Identifying the value and importance of working in and as a group.
Group issues	An understanding of the process of *inclusion, control* and *openness* in group and team processes is crucial.
Emergence	Familiarity with the pace, rhythm and processes of *emergence* is a critical feature of the person's sensitivity to the otherness of the surrounding world.
Self and peer assessment	Enabling individuals to develop and own a realistic view of their own skills, progress, contribution (more often than not people underestimate rather than overestimate) with evidence to support their claim. All in the presence of peers who are also undergoing the same process.
Facilitator styles	Working with the six principle dimensions of facilitator style[20] from the early stages.
The role of systems and organisation	Recognising the part *systems* and *organisations* play in shaping our potential: becoming linked to the emerging 'community' of learners.

[20] The six dimensions of facilitator style are: 1. Planning; 2. Meaning; 3. Confronting; 4. Feeling; 5. Structuring; 6. Valuing. See John Heron: *The Complete Facilitator's Handbook,* Kogan Page, 1999.

Transformative education

Transformative education is one way forward towards a future with greater collaboration, the development of active citizenship, and an exploration and re-assessment of professional education. Second wave transformative education, or integral education[21], holds the following features.

1. Transformative education **fosters the co-creative participation of all human dimensions** in the learning and inquiry processes. A genuine process of integral learning cannot be directed exclusively by the mind but needs to emerge from the collaborative epistemic participation of all human dimensions: body, instincts, heart, mind, and consciousness. All human dimensions need to be actively encouraged to participate creatively at all appropriate stages of the inquiry and learning process; as inquiry tools into subject matter or as evaluators of inquiry outcomes, for example.

2. Transformative education **aims at the study and/or elaboration of holistic understandings, frameworks, theories, or visions**. Whether disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary, integral inquiry builds bridges across disciplines and searches for commonalities while honouring differences in its striving toward integrated understandings that counter the partial or fragmented current state of human knowledge.

3. Transformative education **fosters the activation of students' unique vital potentials and their creative development in the construction of knowledge**. Each human being is unique and potentially able to develop a unique perspective to contribute to the transformation of their community or society. When learning and inquiry are grounded in one's unique vital potentials, academic life becomes not only existentially significant but also more creative, exciting... and fun!

4. Transformative education **balances the feminine and the masculine**. It combines the more masculine elements of the training of skills and analysis of already constructed knowledge with the more feminine element of creatively engendering new knowledge from within. As in life, a dialectical relationship between these fundamental principles exists in the creative process, and integral education seeks practical ways to honour and actualise this relationship.

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[21] These features of integral education are taken from the work of Jorge Ferrer and Ramon Albareda.

5. Transformative education **fosters 'inner' and 'outer' epistemic diversity.** It takes into account the importance of multiple perspectives for the elaboration of valid, reliable, and complete knowledge about any object of study. Integral education incorporates *inner or intrapersonal* epistemic diversity (i.e. vital, instinctive, somatic, empathic, intellectual, imaginal, contemplative ways of knowing), and *outer or interpersonal* epistemic diversity (i.e. knowledge from the various human collectives, ethnic groups, cultures, classes, genders, as well as from associated cross-cultural epistemological frameworks and standpoints). These two types of diversity are intimately connected.

6. Transformative education **promotes the integral development and transformation of students, faculty, and the larger educational container or institution**. The inclusion of all human dimensions in the learning process naturally enhances the transformative, healing, and spiritual power of education, as well as its potential to restructure academic policies and institutional practices.

This is the wider spiritual context in which the cultivation of participatory approaches to integral education gains its fullest import. And this is the context that is crucial for the future of education in the 21st century.

Building another model

This book and the thinking behind it stand in contrast to the predominant ideas about collective action and the organisation of democratic activities. It poses a challenge that goes beyond organisation and new forms of thinking to new forms of 'being-in-the-world'. *It points to the need for a change in consciousness* about how things are connected and how they are influenced by activities that may seem on the face of it to have little correlation to one another.

The neo-liberal model is one whose benefits were greatly over-exaggerated, misapplied and, with some notable exceptions, one which has had immense social costs.[22] It is a model that has not so much been tried and found wanting as one that is testing the planet to destruction, as we see by the consequences gathering around us.

Smaller nation-states, often with few resources, will never be able to bid against

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[22] See the work of John Gray: *False Dawn: the Delusions of Global Capitalism* (Granta Books, London, 2002), and John Kay: *The Truth about Markets: Why Some Nations are Rich but Most Remain Poor* (Penguin Books, 2004), for a wide range of examples and a trenchant critique of the current model of globalisation and its effects.

the combined influence and power of corporate giants, just as no small town council will feel easy in putting strong limits on the social or environmental effects of a key employer without a lot of public support behind it. We see this temerity and restraint at work at all levels because our thinking is based on the same premises at all levels.

What we see happening now, we believe, is that the system itself is being called into question in small and large ways by people in all manner of places, with all kinds of roles, all kinds of priorities and all kinds of aspirations for the future. However, the system will not be changed by the impact of single issue pressure groups, or by well informed representatives of this or that alliance. It will require the combined efforts of all those who have a care for *what we can build together*.

It will look a good deal untidy, unorganised (rather than disorganised) and it will not perform well against the corporate target-driven culture. That is not to say it will be disorderly and haphazard – though it may look it; it will require disciplined thought, careful analyses and sound remedies proposed by those who are in a position to have influence.

Our growing understanding – shared increasingly by more and more people around the planet – is that simply changing practices is not enough, because this does not change the concepts, the culture, or the people.

In contrast to more stable times, the changing of practices has to become more and more frequent to manage the pace of innovation and its effects. In times of sustained unpredictability, and all that this gives rise to, simply changing practices is inadequate; rather a change of understanding and an appreciation of a new paradigm is required. We need to give up old assumptions and find new ones – and to do that we must first see that the old ones are outworn.

The impact of the kinds of change now taking place is manifest at many levels and we observe it perhaps most noticeably in the proliferation of products, the convergence of technology, and the speed of innovation. The use of knowledge is increasingly ambiguous in our era of nanotechnology and accelerating IT, which, in turn, raises concerns about the effects of technological innovations like GM crops, bio-technology and the moral dilemmas generated by the long-term effects of some pharmaceutical innovations. The list is as long as any collector wants to make it.

All these innovations have potentially transformational potential for human societies. The social debate that attempts to highlight the facts that need to be taken into account to find a balance between the supposed benefits and the

social costs, and a citizen's contribution that depends upon values and not instrumental ability, is a discussion about values. It is a discussion in which the citizen and a regard for the social dimensions of technological change are increasingly sidelined.

We are at the point where we need to ask: 'Who is being served by what we are unleashing upon ourselves?'

One way of moving forward

It could start from searching out others of similar or linked interest, though not necessarily of like mind. We would need a starting point and the starting point could be us knowing more clearly what our questions are – not the desire to impress others with the state of our knowledge.

We could circulate those questions to one another and begin to refine them. Some could, on our collective behalf, gather to meditate and ponder creatively, with great attention to distilling these questions in a way that reflects the themes and issues that are present in our lives and our work. They could then circulate those questions back to us. We could meet or Skype and begin the dialogue with some help from one or two modest and entirely discreet folk whose ego is not so in need of attention that they have to be centre stage. These folk could facilitate the process of getting us underway before dissolving themselves into the body of the group.

We could do that in small groups for a time because none of us would be so sure we could or would know how to do that in large groups. We could learn that this process has its potential to assist us in changing ourselves and, as we change, the world would inevitably alter.

1. A group of individuals or a group of groups begin reflecting on: 'What questions would we want to pursue with others engaged in similar questions?'

2. And the circulation begins, for a given time period.

3. At some stage, representatives are suggested/available; they get together and begin to gather the 'felt sense' of what is represented in the questions.

4. They begin to form a working approach/outline of how we might work with the reduced list – themes or some such.

5. The rest then rejoin the preparation and make their comments.

Box 2: Beginning a Collaborative Process: Summary

14. Developing Globally Responsible Leaders

Be careful what you ask for; you may just get it and then you have to deal with what comes.

Moving towards globally responsible leadership[23]

Few people use the term Planetary Citizen in the comprehensive and demanding sense of the commitment espoused in this book. This dilution of meaning applies equally to *globally responsible leadership*. The phrase rolls off the tongue well, but what might we mean when using it?

The concept is elusive and the margin for assumption great, making it all too easy to believe that the person employing the phrase has a similar conceptual sense of whatever it means as we do ourselves, and since few of us have really bothered to unpack this colossal container, it has an easy life and many adherents.

I've come to an understanding, and it changes as new experiences confront me, that at the present time the idea of the Planetary Citizen precedes a sense of what globally responsible leadership might mean. In other words, we need to have a working understanding of what it means to be a Planetary Citizen if we wish to undertake globally responsible leadership, and before getting into that idea, the concepts of *responsibility* and *practice* need to be addressed. We need to recognise and acknowledge that *each one of us is the instrument of the work we do*, and that in most endeavours *responsible practice is an arduous undertaking*.

It becomes clear, therefore, that globally responsible leadership and its practice have a lot of challenges attached to them.

The globally responsible leader?

Do we know what the term means? Is it, for example, somebody who happened to stay out of jail during their career? Is it somebody who lives and breathes ethics? Or, maybe, just maybe, a caring human being?

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[23] This section developed as a result of the GRLI but it extends well beyond and is open for anyone to consider.

Box 3: What is a Globally Responsible Leader?

Put in any of these ways, the term *globally responsible leader* invites the making of grandiose claims that cannot be readily 'evidenced' or demonstrated in practice; it suggests that there is something required from an individual that is a long way beyond how most of us currently act. The risk is to pay lip service to a concept without ever applying it to ourselves in any living way; to support a notion that somehow 'ought' to be more apparent but isn't. In short, it can become another encouragement for us to become familiar with an idea, distrustful of the claim and sceptical of the example.

We already live in times of corrosive mistrust of those in public office or high positions in corporate life, and the weakening of authority and the lessening of hierarchy that accompanies any growth in personal accountability brings with it a corresponding 'shadow' side. We will see more and more figures of formerly elevated social standing fall from grace and they won't all be brought down by the backlash of media frenzy. They will be exposed by the efforts of thoughtful journalists who are willing to risk criticism and opposition in their pursuit of the facts.

The 'great', are they good?

So many of those we think of as demonstrating 'greatness' we never personally meet; we are reliant upon the reports of their admirers and followers. What does that say about both?

The greater the need for leadership within each of us, the more likely we are to be blind to the shortcomings of those we entrust, and the more bitterly betrayed we are likely to feel when they fail us. The greater the need to be seen as such a leader and the more we invite others to depend upon us, the more we have to hide our shortcomings from them (and ourselves) until they become so outrageously apparent that they are clearly seen by everyone else, if not ourselves. These mechanisms of *dependence* and *projection* are well known: they are basic elements of psychological thinking and were demonstrated centuries ago in the plays of Shakespeare.

It is, of course, fine to want to be a better human being, and it is important to seek to be more capable and effective in the world; to manage situations and other people with more care and, in short, to wish to become a more *responsible* individual. But the journey to such a place is best undertaken with an openness to meeting oneself, not directing others. If I cannot face what is inside me I will be tempted to help others avoid themselves or seek to reveal them – either way it is a way of evading myself.

Becoming a leader

This goes to the heart of the leadership issue. Leaders, like parents, are anyone who can get the job. You don't have to pass an exam (yet) to become a parent and you don't have to pass examinations to become a leader, though you are likely to have to go through some form of assessment process somewhere – depending upon the position to which you aspire.

The point is that some of the most dangerous individuals seek leadership positions and do actually get there. Many of those most in need of 'management' are the very people who are in positions of authority over others. This is not to claim the need for more security and more 'nannying' to protect us, only to point out that leadership is not a wholly blessed state and not sought only by those of angelic disposition, as any list of tyrants from the past quickly illustrates.

One of the influential aspects of leadership, to my mind, is that the person who is aspiring to 'lead' is living through their personal actions in the world. They will have considered the implications (though they won't be able to predict them all) and they will face the consequences (though they won't be able to predict them either) of the actions they undertake.

The globally responsible leader as part of a sequence

It isn't possible to act as a globally responsible leader without some notion of what the elements are, how they combine and how they apply to the context and circumstances of your role – all of which requires a great deal of self-knowledge and awareness, and a profound capacity for active reflection. In other words, globally responsible leadership is founded upon other strands and, working backward from the pinnacle represented by globally responsible leadership, they include:
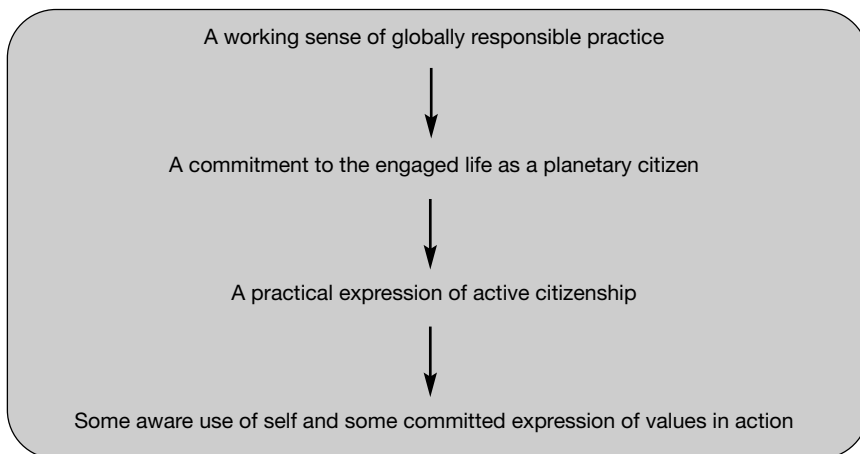
Figure 5: Strands Leading to Globally Responsible Leadership

Practice and responsibility go together; they are intertwined elements of a whole. It isn't possible to have a practice without having a sense of responsibility, intentionality and a measure of reflection. Responsibility without a notion of practice makes little sense, or it becomes a virtuous exclamation linked to nothing real and requires nothing particular of you in the world. Once I take responsibility for my actions then I can improve or deepen my practice with its consequent effects upon my future practice. *A person chooses a practice because they seek to be responsible.* By having a practice you are choosing to attend to what results occur and to modify your actions according to those results – a simple starting point for investigating responsibility.

We do little to enable people to 'find' their practice i.e. that activity which runs like a thread through their day, their work and, for many, even their lives. Doing so might include some or all of the threads in the box below.

1. A regular moment of continuity in a changing world.

2. A point of still return to gather oneself and to evaluate one's impact.

3. A centre to sense one's failings and to move beyond them.

4. A way of developing compassion and acceptance of *what is* without ever giving up the effort to find a better way to the future.

Box 4: Threads within Responsible Practice

Instead we teach, and we teach knowledge-based disciplines that imply practice-based responsibility will arise out of the learning and the knowledge once applied. But practice is about experience – experience that is based on the conundrums of life and the complexities of situations that are, by definition, not found as they are described in a textbook.

At best, the textbook or the lesson notes summarise what the authors or the field in general regard as the principal features of the situation at the time they are gathered. They go on to suggest courses of action based upon those norms, yet in a world of such fast-paced change as ours, this is no longer a very reliable guide for the newcomer.

It serves also as an encouragement to a slavish dependency upon answers others have found to situations that may no longer be very much like our own. There is little more passively self-destructive than, with a willing heart, to adapt your learning to what is not going to work, based on following examples that have succeeded in the past and which you are given to believe ought to serve you well now. It is a recipe for creating cynics.

A Green Hippocratic Oath?

It has been said that a 'management oath' should be created to encourage business leaders to be aware of the broader implications of their actions, including those related to the environment. Certain questions facilitate the process of working out if you are an ethical organisation:

- How would you know?
- What are you using as your measures?
- What are you using as your models and influences?
- Where do you succeed most and what are the most urgent challenges as you see them?
- How are you responding to these challenges?

Studies in the US indicate that it does not pay to be green because the stock price drops, so it will need nothing short of a change of public opinion to encourage organisations to consider green and/or ethical credentials. Are shareholders ready to ignore the binding requirement that directors of a public corporation have a legal duty to protect shareholders' interest above all others, and no legal authority to serve any other interests – such as ethical behaviour? What is required may take a change of law. Business schools are working on the issues – they have to, their students demand it – and their customers – the corporations – are at least thinking about it.

Conclusion: Searching for a Global Process

We are all going to have to wake up, if we are to stand a chance of making it through the crisis that faces us all.[24]

The bigger picture[25]

Philippe de Woot, as I have understood his writing and his views, recognises that we are going to need not only to act differently but also to *think* differently, if we are to act differently *enough*, given what we face – and that we are going to have to do that for just about everything. In our world (the Oasis School of Human Relations), we would recognise this as something that goes well beyond a paradigm shift and moves us into 'seeking' a new world view.[26]

No one group can claim expertise to do that; nor the authority and warrant to execute it. Hence the need for others in their own spheres of activity to be addressing these large concerns in their own way and as best they can.

Some of the implications that follow from the perspective outlined here are clear: "the need of global governance to help implementing sustainable development" (Philippe de Woot), for example. This is the task of citizenship in its widest sense: political activity, social forums and so on – all the interlocking mechanisms that make up a vibrant civil society.

From the GRLI's first report, *A Call For Engagement*, the implications were clear: we will need to change the social, economic and political arrangements we have, if we are to get serious. Some of what is required includes:[27]

1.   Encouragement to develop mechanisms that foster active participation in public debate and responsible engagement towards the Common Good.

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[24] In the UK in 2008 there were two increasingly common calls for a general wake up. One was from a newspaper pointing out that recent research suggests we have 100 months to turn the climate change/global warming crisis around. The second was a photograph of the Arctic circle pointing out that there is now a North West passage and North East passage open – the first time in 125,000 years and thus something never seen by the human species.

[25] This section is based upon a paper written by the author as part of the GRLI and it is included here as a brief indication of how a collaborative, global process can be encouraged.

[26] For many people a paradigm shift is a radical departure but a changing world view is a totally different order of things: it is a shift and recombination of all elements, and the last time this occurred was the Renaissance.

[27] The following list was helpfully suggested by Philippe during the formation of the paper for the GRLI, as were many other ideas here.

2. Greater recognition that economic progress and entrepreneurship are only a part of human progress.

3. A greater awareness of the systemic deviations of our model and of its unsustainability.

4. A global and collective approach based on some coherence between Policy Drivers, Business Action and Social Enablers.

5. A form of ethics that goes beyond compliance.

6. A new balance between entrepreneurship, leadership and statesmanship.

Debates and discussions are deepening and this book aims to suggest directions for more detailed contributions to align themselves. We need to develop our thinking within a more coherent framework, otherwise we are at risk of having many good ideas and suggestions but no central thrust to their purpose. There is a lot to work out about priorities, about effectiveness and about where to put the effort to have most effect. Finding collective, collaborative expression to these issues is not easy but the urgency needs to help us overcome those barriers.

One aim of this book is to stimulate that thinking from within one of the following three domains[28] (if we all do our own things we will all end up in a familiar place) focused around key themes/areas of development for the future of organisations and their relationship to wider society.

1. There is an urgent need to build a debate leading to considered action that calls into question the current premises upon which corporate life is based. We identify this as **a new purpose for the corporation of tomorrow.**

2. There is a corresponding urgency in providing a critique and direction beyond the current body of knowledge that informs the current model of business education. We refer to this as the need for **new thinking for leaders of the organisation of tomorrow,** or **reframing management education**.

3. For either of the two themes above to gain a hold on the

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[28] These were the three themes set out in a presentation by Philippe at the GRLI General Assembly in Mumbai, April 2008.

imagination and the efforts of organisational players and educators, we also need a much deeper appreciation of the forms and challenges posed by introducing deep culture change into organisational life. This is the third theme: **to understand and promote deep culture change**.

We know evolution takes generations; we know too, that organisations can change rapidly when under challenge. People, however, take longer if they are to make changes live within themselves – to take ownership and to embrace it. If we are to develop new purposes we have to inquire into the implications, assess the impact and experiment tentatively.

New behaviour and new understanding can be accomplished in less time, but to change a world view and to begin to work from within is not something we have been asked to consider until now. To promote *deep culture change* in organisations – which is what is required – whether they be corporate or business schools, universities and other centres of higher education, takes a good deal of collaborative consideration by many parties.

The role of organisations

Organisations are the primary engine behind the rapid transformation of human life across the planet and it is through organisational innovation rather than political or social change that our societies are being recast.

This process will not stop in the near future, in fact it will accelerate. Many global organisations in the sheer speed, size, complexity and sophistication of their operations increasingly outpace nation-states in managing their impacts and their effects. Consequently, we are witnessing a shift of power relations that has a fundamental influence upon social and political as well as economic relations across the world. Globalisation is not only an economic development; it works its way through all aspects of human endeavour and human connection.

When there are organisations that have an output greater than the GDP of some nation-states, and when they can move with speed from one favourable 'site' to another as it suits their current ambitions, they are more like nomadic raiders than settled pastoralists. Their capacity to influence and their effects, for good or ill, are neither to be overstated nor to be underplayed.

There are many societies that court such organisations and make great efforts to provide conditions for their arrival because of the hoped-for benefits. There are, of course, costs aplenty and they, too, have to be mitigated, but all too rarely by the organisation itself since the fall-out of globalisation is often left to

be managed by the political administration of the nations themselves, and, in particular, by any disenfranchised citizens. Many of those nation-states are barely operational; their capacity to limit the actions of global players often tokenistic.

Organisations at this level have the power to act at will and with speed. Some operate in 'failed' states where there are virtually no constraints at all and their levels of influence and impact greatly outweigh those of the nation-state. There is little or no accountability for their actions and decisions, which is in marked contrast to the nation-state's need for political accountability through national legislatures and other such structures. It is this that gives rise to such disparity and such imbalance.

Public policies need to be linked to corporate action and corporate action needs to be much more strongly related to publicly beneficial policies. But when the cry is, 'If we can, we must; if we don't, others will', then the question is, 'What can be offered to encourage self-restraint yet which still makes sense?' The risk is one of urgency, which then generates a call to premature action.

The global example described above, caricature though it is, is one that can be seen to ripple through organisational life right down to the smallest enterprise. In the effort to succeed in a highly competitive world the entrepreneur will go to great (any) lengths to ensure their idea gains the most competitive position possible. Sustaining an enterprise is an all-consuming effort and time spent voluntarily adjusting to the niceties of social responsibility is not likely to appeal when survival is at stake or positional advantage needs to be maintained.

We have the system we deserve and we are beginning to know, only too well, the cost involved. It measures rewards in strictly economic terms and any social benefits are an add-on; a welcome benefit, but not essential. The more we embrace the global model of neo-liberal capitalism and the deregulatory carnival that goes with it the more this is so.

Collaborative leadership

New forms of leadership arising out of more collaborative forms of working with a strong capacity to remain engaged in difficult and challenging decisions need not only to be described but to be put into practice. Unless these competing models are surfaced and explored, 'leadership' is likely to remain a 'flavour of the month' (for a lot of months to be sure) but ultimately it offers an unsatisfactory clash between old paradigm ideas and newly emerging forms.

Many of these strands find a gathering point around the questions of ethical practice – the application of professional understanding to the real world of practice. The ordeal of discovering the effects of values in practice is often experienced alone in difficult circumstances with limited support. Burdensome consequences are often the result. Learning how to surface one's value conflicts, how to express them and work with them in front of and with the support of others will grow in importance as the dilemmas of organisational life increase.

The interest in all forms of inquiry-based learning and action research is an indicator of this recognition that organisational life throws up a wide range of issues for which past practice can, at best, only offer some guidelines rather than a detailed blueprint for action. How far these methods are introduced into learning programmes, and how successfully they are developed, are fruitful areas for exploring how practice can catch up with experience in ways that make sense of the experience graduates are inevitably going to encounter.

Discovering a global process

If you are asking the wrong questions, any answers you get won't help you. And if you don't know where you are going, wherever you end up will still only be somewhere else.

The issues we are addressing go beyond any group. They are the responsibility of no single party and they raise issues of wider governance in almost any forum we could list. Since the temptation to grandiosity is strong we have to manage a global concern within a circumscribed domain.

We could say we are searching for a global process, but we are only one part of the process and our concerns relate especially to one domain of that wider process. As the future arrives, keeping our work in balance and in contact with other related actors and their contribution is going to be more important than ever.

The process needs to begin here and with us before it goes 'there' and to other contributors. As we get a more coherent sense of the priorities in the most crucial themes and develop a stronger sense of the difficulties of progressing in each of them, we will have more useful questions to bring to the dialogue with our colleagues in other areas of activity, whether that be in pressure groups, environmental bodies, corporate gatherings or rights-based alliances and 'soft' political lobbyists. Public bodies, labour unions, NGOs, business schools, universities, professional organisations and political parties all have a contribution to make and need to find a greater degree of common cause.

The answers may lie all around us in the words, deeds and thoughts of our colleagues and collaborators, but until our question is sharp and has direction we are unlikely to see just how any of these contributions can help *now* with the issue we see all too clearly before us.

In all this work, uncertainty, insecurity and the sheer scale of the challenge is at times going to be off-putting. It is useful to remember that fear is a manifestation of the social disempowerment so widely felt by so many when confronted with the forces of global change.

Thought leadership (i.e. those who are leaders in developing new ideas) in our times is a question of renewing the humanity of the enterprise; of releasing the care for what lies beyond the instrumental result and the consideration of the welfare that extends beyond our own species and our own time. Science is vital to that process but, without it being irradiated by the wisdom of our humanity, it will continue to dominate our moral imagination and threaten our fragile hold on life.

The soul's destiny is always to be a mysterious force and influence acting upon us. For the work of the soul to thrive it requires an ecology – or a home – where it is allowed room to flourish.

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back
– always ineffectiveness.
Whatever you can do or dream you can; begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.
Begin it now." Goethe

Appendices

Appendix 1: A Project in Transformative Learning

Transformative learning sets out explicitly to work with the whole person to assist in bringing about changes at the level of consciousness as well as behaviour, understanding and emotional freedom. One of the key givens underpinning this level of learning is the recognition that humanity can only sustain itself on the planet at this time by the emergence of a new culture. In addition, there is the belief that each individual holds the key to positive change within themselves and that human beings are powerful creators with the potential to develop and evolve our world consciously, in line with universal laws of wisdom and abundance.

Out of Oasis's involvement with and commitment to the GRLI came the possibility of a *project for transformative learning*.[29] The major strands that would be addressed in such a project are:

1. Individuals being active in planetary concerns.

2. Globally responsible leadership.

3. Transformative approaches to consciousness and the transpersonal.

Invited to come together would be individuals, groups, organisations and interested parties committed to evolving transformative and participatory learning opportunities for cultural change in relation to the planetary crisis and the GRLI's call for globally responsible leadership. For a sustainable planetary future the focus of such a forum would be to develop and encourage the exploration of the above three strands through learning approaches that are consistent with a *whole person learning* approach, a *human relations perspective* and the exploration of *responsibility* in its widest context.

Those involved would consist of a group of **co-learners**, using a peer model of co-creative learning[30] that encourages all relevant questions. It would start from sharing personal experience, skills and resources using peer learning through participation, dialogue and whole person engagement and inquiry-based methods. How would this be achieved and what would be required? The following aspects all need to be addressed:

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[29] There is a similar project in New Zealand, directed by Rose Diamond, in response to the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative.
[30] Co-creative learning is a way of learning that, by definition, has to be a shared and mutual endeavour where authority resides between those involved and not with any one person or leader or entity.

1. Involvement would require a great deal of **trust and surrender** as well as focus.

2. **Recognising and embracing the urgency of our present global crisis** and yet seeing it as an evolutionary opportunity for re-creating our world out of the values of:

   a. Sustainability and respect for Life: working toward greater peace.
   b. An increase in love and solidarity amongst the peoples of the world through the celebration of diversity.
   c. Developing authentic and genuine tolerance along the way.

3. **Understanding that humanity is at the point of a *crisis of consciousness***: it is not more things, more products, more wealth we need to generate, but better use of ourselves and our resources – something which can only be resolved through raising consciousness to a higher, more inclusive level which embodies shared responsibility.

4. **Supporting the grass-roots movements** of those waking up to new perceptions and understandings of the interdependence of all forms of Life and their manifold expression.

5. **Encouraging the transformative power of individual creative efforts** and the possibilities that arise through co-creativity to bring about positive local and global change.

The establishment of a transformative learning project would provide opportunities for effective whole person approaches to self, group, organisational and community empowerment, and to engage with collaborative change processes in order to:

1. Express the wisdom within and between us, and bring into being our highest visions of what is possible in our individual lives, our relationships, families, businesses, communities, country and global family.

2. Discover a common language and meanings for our experience of living on the planet at this time and move beyond our current beliefs and assumptions about life.

3. Encourage and support authentic forms of co-creative leadership and Earth stewardship in all contexts and at all levels of responsibility.

4.   Unlock our collective transformative capabilities and help midwife the birth of a new culture of peace on Earth.

An effective response needs to take place at all levels and so we need to find organisations and people at each of the levels described in Table 6 below, and the minimum requirements for such a project to come to fruition would seem to be:

● Funding to support a co-ordinator and cover costs for the first year
● A group of stewards to hold and develop the vision and evolve an organisational structure
● Collaborators and mentors with global vision
● Facilitators aligned with the vision and interest in becoming part of the core team.

Table 6: Effective Response Levels

Level	Examples
Locally	Campaigns for increased citizen involvement in their own neighbourhood
Regionally	Regional Development Organisation Regional Office Government
Nationally	Major charities Businesses
Globally	The UN The GRLI Transformative Learning Centres in New Zealand and Canada; Presidio Graduate School in California

Appendix 2: Expressions of the New Paradigm

Evolutionary Consciousness serves as an illustration of new thinking and practice in the realm of spiritual effort.

Spiritual Emergence and Contemporary Spirituality

Spiritual emergence has been influenced by the work of Stan Grof and others, and is an aspect of the contemporary spirituality movement. Often people only awaken to their spiritual life as a result of some crisis, and the exploration of themes relating to contemporary spirituality frequently provokes people into some healthy review and revision of their existing beliefs. More often than not it is the first time that people have had the confidence to speak openly about their experience, to test out their views and share their beliefs – not an easy process as anyone who has done it knows.

Contemporary spirituality is a useful term, introduced by William Bloom, which can create a vehicle for many different kinds of practices, views, beliefs and faiths to travel, if not on the same road, then in a similar overall direction.

Growing interest in these two complementary aspects of the shift in consciousness has brought a new dimension to the question of ways forward. The potential both to develop forums for the exploration of contemporary spirituality and for them to be linked into the spiritual emergence network would seem to me to provide a strong base for an evolving initiative in this area.

Participatory inquiry and transformative learning

One of the few certainties in our world is that all around us there is flux and movement, and over the next decades little will remain untouched whether by economic, ecological or climate change.

The challenges we face are not to be solved by individuals or even by select groups coming up with answers for the rest of us. Expertise has its part to play, but since we are all part of the problem, we all need to find ways to engage in how we discover *together* something of the solutions that are needed. This is a new kind of learning – experimental, experiential, challenging and deeply exciting.

Colleagues who have been in conversation with other groups that explore collaborative, spirit-led ways of working have observed that there is often little awareness of the transcendent potential of collaboration beyond whatever activities such groups and organisations are currently engaged upon.

At present, each of our organisations considers the forthcoming changes and perceives them from their own experience and point of view. Imagine it as if each organisation is an island and each island has its own questions and world view, needs and vulnerabilities, opportunities and contribution to make.

1.   How might our islands begin a conversation about the questions we are asking ourselves and share the directions in which we are looking for answers?

2.   Is it possible that as we talk to each other, explore and share our territory with each other, we may come to appreciate that the collective sea in which our islands lie itself offers discoveries, and that building bridges across these islands opens new potential?

In order to enable this to occur, we would begin by putting out a call to a small number of organisations that might find resonance in sharing with each other, and then offer a method for such a conversation to develop as a participative inquiry that may bring us to new understanding and collaboration, even to new experiences of meeting in a collective consciousness.

The Second Wave

Whole Person Learning and the resurgence of the human potential movement are forerunners of the Second Wave: an opportunity to revisit human relations in their widest sense in connection with the planet on which we live. Whole Person Learning is a recasting of the essential elements of the human potential movement and humanistic learning – the individual as learner; the importance of shared decision-making; the need for engaged involvement in the surrounding decision-making process by learners – applied to a changing world and a new century in the light of new research, theory and practice gained over the last 35 years.

All of these have now been extended and applied to wider endeavours in our times: to teams in their formation and development; to groups working out their future; to community organisations in their formation; to organisational players seeking more effective ways of collaborating.

Whole Person Learning rates collaboration highly, manages difference with relish and is robust in its approach to conflict and disagreement. It places strong emphasis upon participation and engagement, on working with and through relationship as the principle means of fostering personal development. It also has an equal focus upon the need for working towards personal goals with and in the company of others.

The Healing Energy Network (HEN)

This network, which met at the Oasis School of Human Relations, existed for a number of years and is an example of high collaboration and engagement in practice. It held to the following working guidelines.

1. **HEN**: a network of **peers** in a **self-generating, self-directing, co-creating** endeavour. This demands a very high order of awareness, high level of consciousness and high level of functioning from every person present in each meeting. It demands of each person the willingness to be fully present to the process; it requires each person to move beyond the ego – as far as is possible; it demands from each person a high level of openness and a non-defensive state.

2. **Transcending the personal**: persons bringing who they are and where they are in that moment to meet with other persons bringing who they are and where they are to transcend the personal and move into higher, deeper, wider levels of consciousness and healing realms. This truly is a high order of functioning. The prime intent is not for personal development although, arguably, it is inevitable that operating in this way will lead to that kind of development. The prime focus is on moving beyond this personal level and entering other states and universal healing spaces.

3. **Unique nature of each meeting**: HEN is an open network of peers, thus each meeting is more likely to consist of different people than, say, a closed and/or long-term group or community. Each meeting can be regarded, therefore, as a 'stand-alone' meeting and will be unique. In addition to the value – and excitement – of co-creating in the moment with the people who are there, if anyone misses a meeting there is less sense of being left behind or of having a gap in understanding.

4. **Spontaneous and co-creative approach**: moving into spontaneous and co-creative expressions of entering altered states, reaching higher levels of awareness, finding healing spaces *together*. The intent is that once we have settled and we are ready to 'work' we sit and allow the 'gathering' to take place spontaneously. This may occur through someone feeling the impulse to suggest a process; it may be through someone having arrived with a possible idea and seeing if it 'fits the moment'; it may be in any manner of ways. The aim is to be open to finding *our* way into the space out of which the rest of the day will flow. In other words, we co-create the day and its process.

Appendix 3: Holistic Values Statement

This statement (www.holisticmap.org) was carefully constructed after consulting over 200 other values statements including the UN Declaration on Human Rights, the Earth Charter and the UK Inter Faith Network's Code of Conduct.

Table 7: Holistic Values Statement

Inclusion and Respect	I welcome diversity of belief, faith, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, intellect, ability and age – and value the unique contribution of every individual.
Environment	I recognise the sacred interdependence of all life and behave so as to protect the health and sustainability of our natural environment now and for future generations.
Spirituality	I recognise spirituality to be a normal and healthy part of daily life, as people experience the wonder of nature and all creation; and I celebrate the many paths that explore this wonder and its meaning.
Relationships	At home, at work and in my community, I am committed to respectful, loving and positive relationships.
Lifestyle	I maintain a lifestyle and gain my income in ways that benefit and do no harm.
Global and Local Citizenship	I actively engage to build community, alleviate injustice and relieve suffering; and deplore any situation that limits the rights, development and fulfilment of any being.
Self-Responsibility	I am actively committed to managing my own health and development; and I value life as an ongoing process of learning.

Index

This publication honours the work of Bryce Taylor in his call to evolutionary consciousness. He heralds a co-creative impulse to engender our fullest potential.

Bryce invites us into his collaborative, safe and co-creative space to take his thoughts further and transform them into action when we are able and ready, and when the time is right. **Anders Aspling, Secretary-General, Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI)**

Bryce's words invariably engage the very core of our being in the desire to make a difference. **Zena Bernacca, Chief Executive Director, Hospice Africa Uganda**

Bryce was mobilised by a sense of life's magic and an intrinsic dynamic of emergence and fulfilment. **William Bloom, spiritual educator**

What remains with me after reading this book? We need to move from an information revolution to a consciousness revolution, it starts now and it starts with me. **Claire Maxwell, Co-Director, Oasis School of Human Relations**

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