



TRANSCENDENT LEADERSHIP: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF AN EMERGENT METAPHOR

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Albert Einstein once said that a problem could never be solved at the same level of consciousness that created it. Yet, great difficulty may lie in shifting from an old to a new paradigm. The road ahead will be difficult, but the course is clear: a new paradigm is needed to bring human efforts to higher levels of synergy: *the metaphor of transcendent leadership*. Transcendent leadership provides a revolutionary frame of viewing human interaction in organizational settings. And as David Suzuki said of human interactions: “Solutions are in our nature.”

A CALL FOR TRANSCENDENT LEADERSHIP

A new, emerging metaphor, transcendent leadership, answers a planetary call for a governance process which expresses an ecological view, one which is more inclusive, more trusting, more sharing of depth of meaning in humanity’s evolution, more involving of people through collective decision making, dialogue and group consent processes, more nurturing and celebrating of creative and divergent thinking and more supportive of a willingness to serve the collective consciousness as determined by the group—in essence, a leadership of wholeness, consciousness, simple wisdom, service above self, and global healing.

The emerging metaphor of transcendent leadership moves us away



from the tired language of our transactional/transformational status quo into a reality worthy of a united planet, a planet of one humanity, moving from interdependence to wholeness. While unchecked globalization is heightening inequality, we have a contribution to make. We must act now. The complex problems of our world today will not be resolved by dissociation; liberation and love are attained by direct experience. It is our sensate experiences which provide opportunities for the emergence of the transcendent. The emerging metaphor of transcendent leadership, deeply aligned with the central criteria of shared governance, offers us a language to help us transcend the status quo (Gardiner, 2006). It is the ability to lead from a consciousness of wholeness that most distinguishes transcendent leadership. We are, *in fact*, all connected.

Transactional, transformational, and transcendent leadership emerge as the three most important models of influence available for accomplishing group purpose. Going beyond transactional and transformational leadership with their bottom lines of profits and people, transcendent leadership adds a third bottom line of Purpose (or planet), the higher calling of a united world, moving from interdependence to wholeness. (For a comprehensive analysis of the three leadership metaphors, please see *Leadership Review*, 6, Spring 2006, 62-76.)

Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) promoted a related metaphor of *servant-leader* describing the leader who was servant *first*. Greenleaf's metaphor inspired and is aligned with the metaphor of transcendent leader—different only in emphasis. Both metaphors point to a movement away from an emphasis on interdependence to one on wholeness; both embody the emergent consciousness of “quiet presence” (Gardiner, 1998, pp. 116-125).

As Lisa Aldon emphasized, “Transcendence provides the awareness/consciousness for the servant leader to lead and grow” (2004, p. 105). Citing John Jacob Gardiner, she noted that

changing the underlying structure of our perceptions to seeing with eyes of wholeness, our fundamental interconnections with each other and with all of life is at the heart of the world's major religions and the modern



sciences of biology and physics, is also at the heart of the transformation. The new leadership is a movement from the transformational emphasis of James MacGregor Burns to the transcendent emphasis of Robert K. Greenleaf. (p. 105)

THE TRANSCENDENT EMPHASIS OF ROBERT K. GREENLEAF

Robert K. Greenleaf was first to present a revolutionary frame of viewing human interaction in organizational settings via leadership of service above self lenses (1977). Greenleaf's servant-leadership offered a frame of leading from a consciousness of wholeness. In the words of Robert K. Greenleaf:

William Blake has said, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite." Those who have gotten their doors of perception open wide enough often know that this statement of Blake's is not mere poetic exaggeration. . . . A qualification for leadership is that one can tolerate a sustained wide span of awareness so that he better sees it as it is. (1970, p. 19)

Greenleaf understood the centrality of "a sustained wide span of awareness" and he understood, most importantly, that "wholeness is only achieved by serving" (1987, p. 25). Serving others is the core of servant-leadership and the heart of transcendent leadership. The movement of humanity from a focus on self-interest to a focus on being of service to others dominates the theory and practice of both servant and transcendent leadership—only emphases are different. Transcendence provides the seed-bed for the servant-leader to bloom.

It is through servant-leadership that the transcendent may make itself known, as transcendent moments occur within relationship . . . relationship to a higher power, self, other, nature, and the unknown. Greenleaf sensed this special time when he noted that "men and women of stature equal to the greatest prophets of the past are with us now, addressing the problems



of the day and pointing to a better way to live fully and serenely in these times” (1998, p. 16).

Servant-leadership focuses on commitment beyond self. As John W. Gardner noted: “People of every age need commitments beyond the self, need the meanings that commitments provide. Self-preoccupation is a prison . . . Commitments beyond the self can get you out of prison” (1994, p. 35). And as Greenleaf emphasized, “The great leader is seen as servant first and that simple fact is the key to his greatness” (1970, p. 2). Leadership is bestowed on a person who was by nature a servant . . . a leader who was servant first.

Kent Keith identified the key practices of the servant-leader as self-awareness, listening first, broadening the top of the pyramid, developing colleagues, coaching—not controlling, unleashing the potentialities of others, and having foresight (2008, pp. 35-55). These practices were shared by the transcendent leader whose practices also included encouraging collective decision making through dialogue and deep listening via silence, meditation, and discernment (Gardiner, 2006, pp. 62-76).

Trust is the cornerstone of leadership. Trustworthiness is a key attribute of both servant and transcendent leader. A leader and leadership group must be deemed trustworthy . . . or else he/she/they must be removed from office. As Greenleaf explained,

A new moral principle is emerging which holds that the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader. (1970, pp. 3-4)

When the leader is no longer servant, he or she must be removed, because “the mere presence of trustees, in the absence of the performance which their place and title implies, does not generate trust—enough trust to give our society the stability it needs” (1974, p. 11). Greenleaf noted here that when boards of trustees or leadership teams are not deemed to be trustworthy, conscientious trustees need to challenge their systems and then, if neces-



sary, to resign in order to bring reform to boards that can no longer be trusted, that no longer serve the interests of society (p. 37).

Trust is essential for both servant and transcendent leaders. As the bottom lines increasingly emphasize profits, people, *and* planet, organizations are best positioned to succeed with transcendent leaders who practice service above self.

In his essay on old age, Greenleaf noted that ultimate service is not about doing, but rather about being. “Now, I came to accept, I can best serve by being . . . I have come to view my meditating as serving . . . Now there is no future and there is really no past . . . there is only now” (1987, pp. 7-8). It was in that now, that Greenleaf, as transcendent leader, charged: “Be open to receive, and act upon, what inspiration offers” (1980, p. 35).

Pain is the great connector of humanity, and the shared experiences of trauma and healing are powerful forces at work globally. While the shadow of trauma may destroy what is best in us, the light of trauma calls forth what is best in us. The best is what is, and often is that which most deeply connects us to each other. Serving is a gift that nurtures this process. Serving enables us to transcend. And as Greenleaf emphasized, people “will freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted servants” (1998, p. 17).

One does not awaken each morning with the compulsion to reinvent the wheel. But if one is servant, either leader or follower, one is always searching, listening, expecting that a better wheel for our time is in the making. It may emerge any day. Any one of us may discover it from personal experience.

I am hopeful. (p. 16)

A better wheel for our times is in the making . . . and many are discovering it as transcendent leadership—critical moments in our lives as individuals and as a collective which are the essence of the better wheel. Greenleaf wrote, “‘Every wall is a door,’ Emerson correctly said. Let us not look for the door, and the way out, anywhere but in the wall against which we are



living. Instead let us seek the respite where it is—in the thick of the battle” (p. 16). Once again, Greenleaf presents us with the wisdom of the wound . . . light shining through the cracks . . . and now every wall is a door . . . and servant-leadership is a portal, as is trauma, a portal through which the transcendent makes itself visible . . . a phenomenon known to humanity in a way that can move us, and is moving us, to a higher order, a more human state of being. . .this transcendent leadership is the new and better wheel Greenleaf described.

TAXONOMIES FOR AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSCENDENCE

In his epic work, *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality* (2000), Ken Wilbur had, at one point, the monumental task of trying to fit together more than 200 hierarchies he had written on pads of paper spread out all over his floor. Our task was no simpler: trying to detail the emerging edges of the transcendent leadership metaphor. A way to begin this journey is with an exploration into various perspectives on transcendence.

Jungian Perspectives

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung wrote of the paradox of death’s brutality and its joyousness. In death, according to Jung, “the soul attains, as it were, its missing half. It achieves wholeness” (1965, p. 324). Pain and suffering create a deep human connection, one awaiting transformation. The transformation that occurs is a mysterious journey, the *way* of healing, and the alchemical process. This transcendent invisible healing then takes us to a *place*; in this place we find gold. This radiance of the soul burning in the face of any and all darkness—this is the transcendent self. In every wound there lies a mysterious power to heal.

In Jungian psychology there are at least three phenomena that speak to transcendence:

- 1) *Albedo*, which occurs when something begins to move deep below



the surface, like a tiny niggling seedling beginning to grow out of the darkness and move toward the light.

- 2) *Transcendent function*, which refers to the case when the tension of the paradoxes is contained for long enough, with enough intention, that the duality of the polar opposites begins to give rise to a mysterious third—a new, formerly invisible option, not a gray area, but a familiar and yet unfamiliar transcendent blue.
- 3) *Active imagination*, which is a form of meditation that was used, at least since the dawn of history, if not earlier, as man's way of learning to know his God or Gods. Active imagination is hard work; we undertake it in order to open negotiations with everything that is unknown in our psyche (Jung, 1971).

Trauma Perspectives

Histories of trauma have a frightening potential to be reenacted in the form of violence. By utilizing the human organism's capacity to register peaceful aliveness, even in the web of traumatic defensiveness, we can all begin to make our communities safe for ourselves and our children. (Levine, 2006)

Traumatized persons experience long periods of time in which they live, as it were, in two worlds: the realm of the trauma and the realm of their current, ordinary life. Very often it seems it is impossible to bridge these worlds. Within the individual there is a tremendous amount of tension between these worlds: the conscious and the unconscious, psyche and soma, form and matter, yin and yang, the internal sensate life and the external sensate life, suffering and healing. The need to build bridges of both an internal and external nature is of paramount importance if we are to aid in transforming traumatic memory and enabling a person to heal and thus transcend his or her traumatic past. Healing from trauma comes with movement via the sensate life, that is to say movement that occurs through both the known and unknown internal and external sensate life, movements which create bridges.



Existential Perspectives

Having lived through four Nazi death camps, Viktor Frankl offered the thought that all life has meaning that can never be taken away from an individual. Only the individual can lose meaning. When this happens, the individual suffers feelings of meaninglessness that Frankl identified as the “existential vacuum.” “For life to have meaning,” he explained, “it must offer the experience of transcendence” (as cited in Thomson, p. 2). The word *geistig* (the spirit) refers to the capacity for self-transcendence, which is our basic nature. The most meaningful experiences in life are those that involve authentic moments of connection. The human spirit may also be experienced through suffering. “Frankl notes that meaning can be found in suffering by transcending the moment to understand the fullest impact of the experience” (Thomson, p. 2). Frankl pointed out:

Life can be made meaningful

- 1) By what we give to the world in terms of our creation
- 2) By what we take from the world in terms of our experiencing and
- 3) By the stand we take toward the world; that is to say by the attitudes we choose toward suffering. (Frankl, 1967, p. 37)

Philosophical Perspectives

Emerson, the father of the Transcendentalist movement, wrote,

We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles; meantime within humanity is the soul of the whole, the wise silence, the universal beauty, to which every part and article is equally related, the eternal one. The soul’s advances are not made by graduation, such as can be represented by the motion upward in a straight line, but rather by ascension of state, such as can be represented by metamorphosis—from the egg to the worm, from the worm to the fly. (1940, p. 265)

Many people make the mistake of assuming that transcendence is purely an upward spiritual experience, which is in fact avoiding the very realities of



our times. Often, the most potent spiritual ideas are those that solidly ground us to our work to one another here on Earth. The call today is for us as a human family to work here on Earth, in this world, together, to connect, to transform, and to transcend what is.

Another kind of transcendence, coined *horizontal* by Todd Eklof, is all about “being the one human being that one is” (2005, p. 2). Horizontal transcendentalism is about reorganizing our connection to all that is around us, to the suffering of the world, and acknowledging our responsibility to create and maintain justice, equilibrium, and homeostasis. Henri Nouwen reminded us that the word *person* comes from *personare*, which means “sounding through.”

Our vocation in life is to sound through to each other a greater reality than we ourselves fully know . . . we sound through a love greater than we ourselves can grasp, a truth deeper than we ourselves can articulate, a beauty richer than we ourselves can contain. (1999, p. 55)

East/West Perspectives

“An important secret for successful non-verbal thinking comes from Miyamoto Musashi—a 17th-century Japanese master of the sword strategy, author of *A Book of Five Rings*. He suggested that we ‘Pay attention to the insignificant’” (Heller, 2005, p. 6).

Every whole has two inseparable aspects, but they turn on into one another, like inhale and exhale. If you were to focus on your breathing right now and begin to exhale and then keep exhaling until your lungs were empty—and then relax—you will find that at the very extreme of emptiness, fullness begins; the same can be observed at the edge of fullness. (Heller, p. 8)



A Global Perspective

In the broadest sense transcendence is an antidote to stuckness. It indicates the movement of one's soul towards a higher purpose, an ideal, which is far greater than one's self. Thus transcendence offers hope where no hope can be found; it supplies illuminations, where only darkness rules. It is the secret yearning of everyone who feels burdened or trapped. (Wong, 2003, p. 1)

Transcendence is our human capacity for freedom. It is freedom of choice, freedom to rise above and beyond internal limitations and external constraints. Our capacity to transcend is rooted in our sensate and spiritual nature.

Frankl tells us we have the freedom to take a heroic stance, and in his 1946 book *Man's Search for Meaning*, a diary of his life in Auschwitz, he demonstrates to us the extraordinary heroism encased within the human person even in the most horrible of circumstances. Within the transcendent self, there lives freedom—freedom from all constraints, freedom to live authentically.

The pathways to self-transcendence are full of trials and tribulations. At times, the obstacles and pain are almost too much to bear. Just when we have reached our end, as the void looms ever closer, a spark ignites and we sense light, something emerging on the periphery of our consciousness. Everything grows out of darkness, and thus the transcendent is always available to us.

Contrary to common perception the transcendental life is not necessarily one of quiet contemplative existence, free from the storms of life. Rather it is a dynamic, forward moving struggle, characterized by alternating cycles of action and non-action, growth and decline, and it shuttles between idealism and realism, day and night, Heaven and Hell. (Wong, p. 2)

The transcendental life is the solitary journey of the self toward the self. It may be a dark road, fraught with mystery and pain, and we may never know



where it will lead us, but we can be sure wholeness will come if we dare to awaken our divine secret dream. Transcendence often involves an uncommon courage to face the void in a state of utter vulnerability. Transcendence is the embracing of wholeness and the releasing of familiar fragmented parts.

Business Perspectives

Ancient wisdom and indigenous knowledge invite us to return to self and center. Transcendent leadership requires much more than our traditional leadership qualities and traits. Transcendent leadership calls for traits such as “the cultivation of generosity, ethics or integrity, patience, humility, unselfishness and wisdom” (Walters, 2006, p. 1).

If one practices these six principles, one is a natural leader . . . Others will automatically look to you for guidance, motivation, and hope. They will have trust. They will have faith. From this faith and trust, they will develop confidence in themselves to accomplish their goals. This is transcendent leadership, and transcendent leadership can move mountains. (Beach, 2003, p. 1)

Religious Perspectives

“Lord, lift me up let me stand, By faith, on Heaven’s table and a higher plane than I have found; Lord, plant my feet on higher ground” (Todd, 1923, p. 127). “Transcendent Leadership climbs a mountain. On that mountain, transcendent leadership together reads the world. Transcendent leadership wears a special pair of reading glasses, tri-focal, with three viewing prescriptions” (Christopher, 2006, p. 3). These lenses help us explore the dimensions of cohesion, capacity, and momentum.

- A) Cohesion – containment, holding, providing, and lifting
- B) Capacity – a focus on the capacity of the body, faithfulness, transformation, healing, and courage



C) Momentum – the journey, context to context, movement and wholeness.

EMERGING EDGES OF TRANSCENDENT LEADERSHIP: CORE VALUES AND EXEMPLARS

In the words of Gareth Morgan, “The role of leadership is about the creation and facilitation of core values. About a sense of vision, or the ability to catalyze people’s efforts. A sense of vision and values can provide the parameters for self-organization” (1996, p. 10). Transcendent leadership’s sense of vision and values are outlined below in the stories of core values and exemplars from yesterday and today.

Howard Gardner emphasized in his book, *The Quest of Mind*, that “the whole course of human development can be viewed as a continuing decline in egocentrism” (1981, p. 63). It is this movement from egocentrism to a consciousness of wholeness that most distinguishes transcendent leadership. The essential understanding that we are one . . . moves the dialogue from the question of “What’s in it for me?” to the question of “How can I help?” The essential understanding that we are one moves humanity from being decentralized in egos and selves to being centered on service to others and on care for our home planet.

In the words of Albert Einstein,

A human being is part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. The delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. (as cited in Wilber, 2000, p. 136)

In addition to the centrality of a consciousness of wholeness leading to Ein-



stein's "widening our circle of compassion," transcendent leadership emphasizes, among others, such core values as love and healing, integrity and courage, humility and wisdom, and truth and peace.

LOVE AND HEALING: MOTHER TERESA, OPRAH WINFREY, AND JOHN HENRY STANFORD

Healing is the process that makes us whole; healing is the process that makes us holy. Mother Teresa saw that "it's our love of God that is the main thing;" healing came from "trying to share and understand the suffering of others." It was "how much love we put into the doing—compassion in action that promoted our own healing and that of our world" (as cited in Shield & Carlson, p. 151). Transcendent leaders, according to Mother Teresa, are people who realize that "we have all been created for the sole purpose to love and be loved" and that "service to others," which is "compassion in action," makes us whole with all of life, makes us holy with all of creation.

This emphasis on healing, making themselves and us whole, is found—to one degree or another—in all transcendent leaders. Oprah Winfrey models this urgency of healing in her transformational and loving work with people. She explains, "Your life is a journey of learning to love yourself first, then extending that love to others in every encounter" (2005, p. 28). Love as the primary tool, making us one with all of creation, is at the heart of her powerful ministry. As Winfrey explains, "When you make loving others the story of your life, there's never a final chapter, because the legacy continues as you lend your light to one person, and he or she shines it on another and another and another" (p. 83).

John Henry Stanford, the late superintendent of schools in Seattle, Washington, modeled this healing through love in all of his personal and professional endeavors. He modeled transcendent leadership in many powerful ways. On his desk was a plaque that read, "Love 'em and lead 'em" . . . and he lived those words as an African-American general in the U.S. Army, as a county executive in Georgia, and as a superintendent of schools



in Seattle. The power of healing through love in military, educational, and service organizations is outlined well in Ruth Walsh McIntyre's (1999) dissertation on John Henry Stanford, whose life served as an excellent model of transcendent leadership.

INTEGRITY AND COURAGE: ANWAR SADAT, BILL & MELINDA GATES, AND WARREN BUFFETT

Anwar Sadat, president of Egypt, modeled courage and integrity as the transcendent leader who brought about the Camp David Peace Accord between Israel and Egypt. Sadat had become a very popular president devoted to the Arab cause—promising to never give Israel one inch of Arab soil. Yet his time as a young man in solitary confinement in cell 54 of the Cairo central prison taught him that “he who cannot change the very fabric of his thought will never be able to change reality, and will never, therefore, make any progress” (as cited in Covey, p. 56). As a transcendent leader, he “changed the fabric of his thought” and went to the Knesset in Jerusalem to begin the remarkable peace process. Modeling the courage and integrity of transcendent leadership, he changed the course of human history; and, like many transcendent leaders before and after him, paid with his life for doing what seemed right to his conscience.

Bill and Melinda Gates, along with Warren Buffett, have also modeled transcendent leadership in their integrity and courage as people of great wealth who have taken on the cause of health care for the world's poor. Billionaires who walk their talk, they have created the world's largest non-profit foundation by pooling their great wealth for the cause of global health. Bill Gates, who will be stepping down as head of Microsoft to coordinate the foundation, is clearly a person of conviction and integrity; Warren Buffett, who gave his money to the foundation of another, modeled integrity and courage—pointing the way for future transcendent billionaires and millionaires to help heal our world; Melinda Gates models the compassion of that transcendent leadership, helping to bring together and distribute



the resources in an effective and efficient manner to leverage giving by the world's governments, businesses, and people to new heights.

HUMILITY AND WISDOM: POPE JOHN XXIII, THE DALAI LAMA, AND JOHN W. GARDNER

Humility is a requirement for wisdom. Without the ability to be open and receptive, human beings cannot attain great wisdom.

Pope John XXIII modeled great humility and great wisdom in his leadership of the Catholic Church and its 800 million followers worldwide. In convening Vatican Council II, he opened the doors and windows in Christendom's largest church, changing forever the way it related to the world and to God. The joyful Pope John was an authentic presence throughout his life, striving on each page of his journey to live up to the virtues of the God he served. He stressed "what unites rather than what divides" and thus opened the doors of the Church of Rome to all, focusing on ecumenism as the central energy of the Vatican Council he convened. His autobiography, *Journey of a Soul*, shines with the humility and wisdom that guided his life. "He succeeded in becoming a spiritual person who was at peace with himself and who could, therefore, inspire others . . . Pope John's simplicity was complete, pure, and eloquent" (Gardner, 1995, pp. 168, 180). Few leaders of the past can model the transcendence of the joyful Pope John!

His Holiness, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso of Tibet, is one of our century's most transcendent leaders. Humility and wisdom mark his leadership. His life is his message. "All religions can learn from one another," he declared, adding that "their ultimate goal is to produce better human beings who will be more tolerant, more compassionate, and less selfish" (as cited in Shield & Carlson, p. 4).

In 1959, he went into exile after China invaded Tibet. Now, the Dalai Lama brings the message of reconciliation to the world, transcending all boundaries of religion, nation-state, and political persuasion. In 1989, his work for peace was recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize. In September 2006 he was in Vancouver BC announcing the opening of the Centre for



Education and Peace. He remains a humble, joyful, hopeful model of transcendent leadership.

A transcendent leader “comes to show us not who *he* is, but who *we* are” (Walters, 1999, p. 96). John W. Gardner, philosopher, statesman, business leader, and professor, was such a transcendent leader. He asserted,

The reservoir of unused human talent is vast, and learning to tap that reservoir more effectively is one of the exciting tasks ahead for mankind . . . we can do better . . . much, much better. . . The development of leaders is possible on a scale far beyond anything we have ever attempted. (1990, p. xv).

Gardner believed in all of us . . . and led a life that modeled uncommon, transcendent leadership for our time. A model citizen, his greatest creations came from his service to government and industry in the cause of the common good from the Common Cause to the White House Fellows Program, from the Independent Sector to Made in America. Through his humility and wisdom, he saw the treasures within each of us . . . and, indeed, came “to show each of us not who *he* was but who *we* are” (Walters, 1999, p. 96)—a mark of the transcendent leader.

TRUTH AND PEACE: MOHANDAS GANDHI, NELSON MANDELA & DESMOND TUTU, PEACE PILGRIM

Mohandas K. Gandhi made truth into a great political force for human reform through satyagraha, his innovative approach to conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence. Satyagraha (or truth force) has inspired nonviolent resistance among political activists and dissidents throughout the world since that time. “In what would ultimately become known as satyagraha, those who felt discriminated against would refuse to obey unjust laws but would do so nonviolently and would be prepared to accept any consequence, ranging from arrest to death” (Gardner, 1995, p. 273). Commenting on Gandhi’s transcendent leadership, Albert Einstein said, “Generations to come . . . will scarcely believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and



blood walked upon this earth” (as cited in Gardner, p. 276). Gandhi had transcended the status quo of politics as usual and raised the playing field to a higher moral plane, one based on the power of truth and love.

Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, political and spiritual leaders of the transformation of South Africa from world pariah to world-class paradigm, both modeled truth and peace in their work to transcend the status quo of harsh reality. With humility, Nelson Mandela advocated interpersonal peace; Bishop Tutu conducted nationwide dialogues on truth and reconciliation. Together, these two transcendent leaders model the path to peace within a diverse and unjust world.

Peace Pilgrim, whose real name was Mildred Norman, wandered the North American continent as a witness to peace for more than 27 years. She proclaimed the connection between inner peace and global peace . . . and offered the truth of our interconnection as one human family. Peace Pilgrim’s death in an automobile accident did not stop the seeds of her transcendent leadership in the form of the people she influenced to work for inner, communal, and global peace in the world.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS BY JOHN JACOB GARDINER

Transcendent leadership is grounded in core values that include humility, love, courage, persistence, integrity, compassion, service, and peace. Successful social entrepreneurs display six qualities that appear to parallel transcendent leadership: 1) a willingness to self-correct, 2) a willingness to share credit, 3) a willingness to break free of existing structures, 4) a willingness to cross disciplinary boundaries, 5) a willingness to work quietly, and 6) a strong ethical impetus (Bornstein, 2004, pp. 233-241). Transcendent leadership focuses on the big picture, synthesis of complex data, seeking out problems and change, finding ways for everyone to win, and communicating effectively (McIntyre, p. 42). Transcendent leadership involves spiritual intelligence regarding the true nature of an interconnected world and its dominant principles of truth and love.

Robert K. Greenleaf inspired a movement toward transcendence,



toward a focus on the welfare of our planet as a practical objective. Transcendent leadership remains the hope of a world awakening, the dream of a world reborn. It is “a totally new kind of leadership,” one that is “‘world-centric’ – that is able to think on a global level” (Link, Corral, & Gerzon, p. 330).

Daniel Goleman noted in his book on social intelligence, citing W.H. Auden, “‘We must love one another or die!’” (2006, p. 319). Fortunately for us, he added, “the social brain’s wiring connects us all at our common human core” (p. 319). Transcendence is the realignment of ourselves with our common human core. “Transcendence is the power to be born anew. . . to reunite with the life force” (Fritz, 1989, pp. 276, 283). In the words of St. Augustine, “Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.”

As Ken Wilber noted: “Development is evolution, evolution is transcendence, and transcendence has as its final goal Atman, or ultimate Unity Consciousness” (1980, p. 334). Transcending division, apathy, crises, and uncertainty, and realizing the promise of human potential lie ahead for our species. *Let us commit to support only* leaders who break down the walls that separate us from each other as members of one world community. Let us commit our leaders to encourage dialogue and collaboration across race, gender, age, professional, religious, and class lines. Let us commit ourselves to becoming transcendent leaders and to no longer supporting toxic leaders. In the words of John W. Gardner, “We can do better. Much, much better” (1990, p. xv). For the sake of the welfare of our home planet, we must do so soon. Transcendent leadership offers us a powerful metaphor, a portal for the new way of being and thinking and doing that is required of us all.

The twentieth century will be chiefly remembered in future centuries not as an age of political conflicts or technical inventions, but as an age in which human society dared to think of the welfare of the whole human race as a practical objective. (Arnold Toynbee as cited in Bornstein, 2004, p. 242)



As Link and Lovins note, “Leadership to cross over must come from us all, and, in every sector, people *are* stepping forward to make a difference” (Link, Corral, & Gerzon, 2006, p. 299). Each of us must be born anew. Each of us must reunite with Earth.

CONCLUDING METAPHOR BY ELIZABETH LENA WALKER

It appeared as a flash, almost like a vision, a huge fierce and mighty bear deep in the woods. The bear’s right paw was caught in a vicious brutal bear trap. There was blood everywhere. Some days had passed and the screaming howling pain and the rage had died. The bear had eaten all the berries and had drunk any water within her reach; the noise she now made was a deep guttural moaning sound, unlike anything heard before or since. She had exhausted herself to the edge of unconsciousness fighting what she knew must come next. She must sever her own right paw in an effort to save herself. She may live, she may not. Several more days passed while she moaned and rocked. Her courage had enabled her to make the decision and she was preparing to act, to sever the paw with her own teeth!

Suddenly something moved off in the distance: behind a veil of sorts appeared a woman. The woman was shape shifting, from woman to bear to eagle and back again. Something in the bear shifted and suddenly with a flash of knowing the bear became eagle and soared above the mountains. The bear had transcended her pain, she had moved from the known hell toward the unknown heaven. Following this mysterious transcendent moment, the dream awoke!

We are facing numerous complex paradoxes at this critical juncture in our history and we are seeking to understand the complex, yet simple layers of paradox within our collective soul. We must return to our origins within the collective unconscious and there connect with the power of the numinous. Everything around us is moving very quickly, and amidst the noise is a *cry*; the cry is for Transcendent Leadership. We must draw on our collective wisdom, in order to transform our collective consciousness and tran-



scend our suffering. The power of the numen is within us and all around us, swirling like a wind.

I'd like to end by quoting Clarissa Pinkola Estes, who offers humanity the following prayer.

May we all be awakened,
And granted full healing.
May we all be granted peace,
So may it be for me.
So may it be for you.
So may it be for all of us. (Estes, 2006, p. 10)

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