



STORM WARNINGS: THE OBVIOUS AND LATENT DISORDER  
APPROACHING FROM CHANGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT,  
ADDICTION, AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

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*He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is." Luke 12:54-55*

As the crowd looks to the expanding global horizon, they see complex social change approaching like brewing storms. These storms threaten to introduce powerful winds of disconnection, disorder, and chaos that will generate great challenges for leaders in the next decade. The first storm is the environment's irreparable changes in nature and population. The second storm is society's saturation with the intrusion of addictive process, and the third is the confusing socialization structure of the family. I believe we will all be impacted by decisions leaders make around these three developments. These coming storms may seem obvious, but their latent impact is not. Populations have often remained comfortable with a status quo until disaster forced them to change, adapt, or cooperate (Sanderson & Alderson, 2005, pp. 23-26). Prudent awareness of and wise forethought concerning the stability, operation, and problem-solving capabilities of transforming communities can help future leaders lead.

As a minister and licensed therapist who both personally and collectively experiences his own sense of unrest, complexity, and chaos, I feel humbled by the great questions and callings of my Christian faith tradition. From this article, I welcome a dialogue of thought, faith, and action that



honors the wisdom gained in all faith traditions, not just my own. It appears many large and seemingly unsolvable difficulties are approaching the world population to which we all belong. A powerful diversity of voices is necessary to encounter such a future with grace, love, and power. In the Christian tradition, Jesus warned in such times to ready ourselves and to watch (Luke 12:35-40, New International Version).

All relational environments struggle to operate by linking meanings and symbols that organize groups into functioning systems. As Cooper (2005) notes, “Human agency works by reflecting itself though the meaningful connections with its environment . . . connections are a necessary strategy in representing a coherent world in which disconnected elements are made to fit together” (p. 1690). Meaning reifies in language when it serves as a symbolic “container” for the expressions of what we esteem. We all learn symbols of familiar meaning and attempt to integrate these meanings into a predictable and continuous interaction. Robert Greenleaf put it thus:

The power of a symbol is measured by its capacity to sustain a flow of significant new meaning . . . it produces a confrontation in which much that makes the symbol meaningful comes from the beholder . . . Meaning from an interaction with a symbol is a new creation. (2002, p. 329)

These social storms will disrupt cohesive meaning, but will also provide leaders occasions to arise as creators of transformed meaning, as light amid the darkening disorder (Frankl, 1959).

When communities choose to pursue a mutual goal of wellness and progressive connection of common symbols, even just to survive, they create a synergetic resolution—*the combined effort of distinct individuals in particular circumstances using collective knowledge and cooperating to achieve a unique, corollary outcome*. Synergetic resolution requires an ability to forecast the future to strategize a life-affirming goal or to avoid decline. I will describe the obvious and latent disconnections from the flow of meaning and social process we might expect from the approaching global



storms, and then I will address how communities may recognize the emergence of servant-leaders with adaptive skills to accomplish such resolutions.

#### THE ENVIRONMENT: A CHANGE IN VENUE

Many reputable institutions and authorities present convincing evidences that global warming is not only taking place, but is also changing large weather systems historically thought to be consistent and predictable. Recently, Bill Blakemore (2007) reported that NASA and the Columbia University Earth Institute warned in new research that “dangerous consequences for the planet” from warming are closer than originally believed. The new study emphasizes reports from several feedback loops that observed that in as little as ten years the deterioration of the ecosystem could decline beyond its ability to be addressed by a reasonable solution or our ability to reverse its effects. The Nobel award to Al Gore and the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change calls leaders to consider decisions now that prepare and protect the increasingly complex global community before NASA’s prediction becomes fatally true. MSNBC reported in June 2006, “Global warming accounted for about half of the extra hurricane-fueling warmth in Atlantic waters off the United States in 2005, while natural cycles were smaller factors, according to the National Center for Atmospheric Research” (MSNBC Interactive, 2006). Hurricane Katrina was one of the most notable storms of that year, due mainly to the controversial negligence of various levels of leadership. Leaders from the city’s mayor to the federal government responded to the tragedy in shameful abandonment of their duties to prepare for the future and to appropriately provide care to the people for whom they were responsible (Williams, 2005, p. A28).

Although New Orleans Mayor Nagin criticized federal attempts to provide relief, his own two-day delay in preparing and gathering resources resulted in failure to evacuate the poorest communities and rendered the city’s fleet of school buses useless (Lipton, Drew, Shane & Rohde, 2005). In a *Wall Street Journal* commentary, Bob Williams (2005) described a



detailed city plan for New Orleans that was designed to evacuate up to a million people and provide transportation for 300,000 people. The plan itself said that the leaders possessed adequate insight into possible catastrophes with the intensity of Hurricane Katrina. Williams declared the leaders' lack of response "a national disgrace due to their failure to implement the previously established evacuation plans of the state and city. . . If the plans had been implemented, thousands of lives would likely have been saved" (Williams, 2005, p. A28).

Nationally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) could only apologize for not being ready for the overwhelming devastation. The leadership of this governmental department, designed to be prepared for such calamity, failed to serve the people who entrusted their safety to them. This illustration demonstrates that leaders cannot be indecisive or passive when the safety of the people they serve is threatened by the effects of climate change. However, global warming is not our only concern, or even the most immediate problem.

As warming changes weather patterns that impact resource production and social stability, populations will be forced to adapt to new structures of survival, conservation, security, production, and commerce. Consequently, these climate changes will reveal the latent and greater problem of growing populations and the unequal distribution of resources. Increased and concentrated population growth will produce progressively complex system needs, requiring people to develop unified goals and plans for balanced distribution of resources (Cooper, 2005; Kuhn, 2007; Sanderson & Alderson, 2005). This situation will create severe obstacles when leaders struggle with priorities of conservation, security, production, and commerce for the whole versus the survival of a single group. The most powerful people in societies will choose and develop the new structure and decide to whom it will apply.

Consequently, stories of exploitation continue today and still carry proponents that think parochially about the impact of these choices of priority. Judith Plant (1997) complained that this arrogant assumption of power leads to the exclusion of indigenous knowledge as a relevant resource for



political, environmental, and relational function that will be greatly needed in our complex future. For example, women manage 80% of farming and produce 60 to 80% of the world's food (Warren, 1997, p. 9). What do these women know that can serve local and global difficulties? How can such "invisibility" be transformed into overt knowledge in order to contribute to synergetic resolve? The exclusion of indigenous knowledge reveals distorted and discriminatory ideologies and severely impacts those who are unheard. Such inaction illustrates poor leadership and a poorer ideology that constructs barriers to communal synergy. Without inclusion, conflicts about populations, land, and commerce involving storm-riddled coast lines and drought-laden territories will escalate and increase the global stratification of people groups.

In desperate or chaotic times, exclusion of the indigenous voice contributes to a distorted process of legitimized discrimination, ethnic cleansing, genocide (Brym & Lie, 2007), and the darkest of human behavior. Without considering a connected relationship with a people, those in power will make policy to their own advantage without regard for the cost to others. As Petra Kelly said, "We have all seen men whose power has caused them to lose all sense of reality, decency, and imagination, and we are right to fear such power" (1997, p. 114). This type of disconnection fosters a cultural ideology that can do harm without conscience.

All leaders will face political destabilization and major fluctuations in population as people migrate to search for resources and to avoid conflicts. The Niger and Monu rivers provide freshwater sources for many nations. Thus, "as droughts worsen and more water is extracted from them conflicts will be inevitable. . . As temperatures rise and farmland is reduced, population pressures will trigger violence that authorities will be unable to contain" (McKie, 2007). The people most affected will be those least heard. As well, "in an increasingly interconnected world, governments are unlikely to be able to solve the many problems posed by international migration through unilateral approaches only. Source, receiving, and transit countries must all cooperate to manage international migration" (Martin, 2001, p. 45).



As global warming disrupts expected weather patterns, expanding populations are forced to adapt to displaced and limited resources. Those with power and prosperity have a responsibility to reevaluate the balance of knowledge, resources, and connection in the increased complexity of communities struggling to survive in their midst.

Greenleaf experienced the deficit in the unequal exchange of knowledge and resources when he served in the 1970s as a consultant to an administrative school in India. In his final report to the foundation that employed him, he wrote, "I believe that if we want to continue to be useful to the Indians we should use our resources as much to learn from them as to facilitate their learning" (2002, p. 323). Greenleaf's thoughtful, inclusive ideology models future interactions between people groups, particularly in their time of need. Refugee populations have much to contribute to their new hosts, and the opportunity to exchange knowledge and resources should be considered among leaders and educators in the coming global venue.

#### ADDICTIVE PROCESS: A CONTRIBUTION TO DISORDER

People using drugs search for a reality in a drug-induced, non-real world. This addictive process presents a severe risk to society, and various studies have attempted to quantify the impact of this social menace. *USA Today* reported that England is reassessing the definition of addictive drugs. Professors at Britain's Bristol University recommended a new categorization of

harmful substances, based on the actual risks posed to society. . . . Nutt and colleagues used three factors to determine the harm associated with any drug: the physical harm to the user, the drug's potential for addiction, and the impact on society. (www.usatoday.com, March 23, 2007)

A recent survey of 14,000 high school seniors illuminates the active substance abuse among youth across America: Alcohol – 75%, Cigarettes –



54%, Marijuana and Hashish – 45%, Amphetamines – 15%, Hallucinogens – 11%, Tranquilizers – 11%, MDMA (Ecstasy) – 9%, and Cocaine – 8.5% (Johnston, O'Malleu, & Bachman, 2003). These are alarming numbers, especially because these are high school students who have already selected a means of escape to the non-real. Thus, 75% of the high school students surveyed are inviting some form of liver disease or worse. It has also been known since the 1960s that cigarettes guarantee a reduced lifespan and severely deteriorated health in later years. Insurance companies' rates clearly demonstrate the smoker's lessened life expectancy; yet over half of the students surveyed cope with the stresses of life by smoking.

Again, *USA Today* reported, "Tobacco causes 40% of all hospital illnesses, while alcohol is blamed for more than half of all visits to hospital emergency rooms. The substances also harm society in other ways, damaging families and occupying police services" ([www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), March 23, 2007). In considering the other kinds of drugs experienced, any parent would be concerned for the future of his or her child. The ease with which our children practice escapism will create serious social problems when shifting populations require people to function at higher levels of maturity and reality perception due to complex environmental and population changes. People's desire for drug-induced escape will turn into demand, which in turn will increase corruption and criminal activity.

Leaders already search for those who will serve in an orderly, purposeful system. Organizations currently distinguish between youth entering the work force who practice self-discipline, accountable reality, and relational maturity, and those who do not and whose lives are influenced by a distorted search for the unreal. However, as polarization between those who have resources and criminals who want them increases and legislation to control such matters fails, societies and companies will be forced to adapt and function at a lower level of social maturity to achieve a higher level of security. Leaders will have less freedom to pursue new, innovative vision because they will expend time, money, and creativity just to defend stability.



As a result, wealthy systems will strive toward more separate or gated communities to protect themselves from a drug-saturated portion of the population, and stratification of society will escalate. Those who live in “gated communities, in which upper-middle-class residents pay high taxes to keep the community patrolled by security guards and walled off from the outside world. . .are motivated above all by fear of urban crime” (Brym & Lie, 2007, p. 471). These elite isolated communities will invite businesses to serve them, businesses will accommodate the requests to seek market security, and resources will be withdrawn from the community at large. This situation will be similar to the exodus of wealthy families and organizations from the inner cities in the ‘50s and ‘60s, leaving in their wake depressed populations in slums and ghettos (Brym & Lie, 2007).

The wave of addictive behavior in youth today creates stress for the systematizing principles of society. A good portion of energy and resources must be used to make up for the distance lost, and making progress is difficult at best. The very nature of parts in a complex system is to work together to create a synergetic whole (Richardson, 2004; Siegel, 2003); addictive behavior disrupts the course of this process. Siegel (2003) believes the health of a social system is defined by the system’s ability to achieve maximum complexity through its parts integrating and transforming into new, corollary outcomes (p. 5). A city has many individual parts that must work together for a community to exist in predictable order. Those parts must constantly reorganize due to changes in safety, flows of traffic, commerce, distribution of goods, provision of resources, employment, housing, accessibility, and entertainment. Unique individual people work together to use local resources, each other included, to overcome specific obstacles and to collectively construct a distinct community and culture that develops further a predictable, complex organization (Hatch, 2006; Kuhn, 2007). Similarly, a Christian view presents the notion that God’s final vision of salvation guides and builds His church “as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:3-8). It is the uniqueness of the indi-



vidual parts and the way in which they organize that constructs a complex, distinct system.

Because the complex system naturally seeks its maximal level of complexity, the system experiences distress and an inability to grow to higher levels of function when it is restrained or disrupted. If the system depends on its parts to function within progressively elevated disciplines, then parts declining in function and integration make the rest of the system work much harder just to sustain stability, creating “stress to the system” (Siegel, 2003, p. 4). When various portions of a society fail to integrate appropriately, leaders struggle to stabilize the tension between what is and what should be before new levels of functioning can take place.

Like a social poison, addiction kills, steals, and destroys the life, health, and happiness of so many, only to perpetuate through generations in communities of disorder and disconnected realities. Leaders will experience frustration in their inability to develop healthy social networks. Such a forecast necessitates specific research for leaders to consider alternative actions that invite youth to a healthier way of being, and to provide effective healing for their inevitable sorrow brought on by losses and chaos from environmental changes and increased population.

#### THE FAMILY: IN SEARCH OF BELONGING

At one time, the family unit served as the primary socialization institution that prepared children to live as appropriate, contributing adults. However, the youth of today are saturated with many influences outside family by which they choose to identify themselves, their behavior, and their future. Brym and Lie (2007) described major trends that impact the socialization process and function of the family, including the decline in adult connection and supervision; this abandons children “to socialize themselves and build their own community” (p. 80), whether real or non-real. Chap Clark (2004) referred to this latent community as “the world beneath” (pp. 57-70), and wrote that parents have yielded their power to usher children into an improved social order by increased divorce rates, adult sexuality,



economic demands, and living with uncommitted partners amid children. “In the course of my study,” Clark continued, “I found that this effect has been powerfully destructive. . .the adolescent is left to discern how to handle the multi-conflicting messages related to home, stable relationships, and internal security” (2004, p. 34).

Thirty years ago social reformers wanted to eradicate many of the family’s social developmental processes in favor of corporate practices designed by educators and the state for a better “product” (Hauerwas, 1981, p. 164). In light of such expectations, families have lost confidence. Thus, the latent impact is that many families relinquish their socialization powers to “experts,” TVs, computers, and toys, believing this will assist them in parenting their children in a progressively multi-verse culture. Also, increased complexity in stratification, resource demand, and economic instability appear to make various forms of family structure insufficient to socialize children adequately. Many times a family unit feels unable to equip and launch children who are prepared for today’s social struggles.

A second concern of Brym and Lie (2007) is the saturation of media influence. The decline in adult connection opens a pathway for multifarious forces difficult for youth to discern. One study reports, “Daily television viewing for two or more hours in early childhood can lead to behavioral problems and poor social skills, according to a study of children 2.5 to 5.5 years of age conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health” (Mistry, Minkovitz, Strobino, & Borzekowski, 2007). Brym and Lie (2007) suggest that in times past, locally connected systems taught youth a more coherent and unified construct of values and beliefs, whereas today “youth are more susceptible to the influence of the mass media and peer groups” (p. 81). The speed of life can leave many kids running to keep up, and seeking relief or escape in misbehavior and in the non-real, where they have a degree of control. Even helpful developmental activities move out of their reach at this pace, as “many of them are simply too busy with household chores, child-care responsibilities, and part-time



jobs to enjoy the benefits of school activities outside the classroom” (Brym & Lie, 2007, p. 81).

Clark (2004) explains that our youth are lonely. Although parents face challenges, he points out the many complex expectations youth are required to “navigate” (p. 63). They seem to develop multiple selves to negotiate their layered environments, depending on the “expectations of those who control the world in which they live” (p. 66). Thus, it appears to the teen that parents are only one of many levels to be addressed, not relevant resources of truth, solace, or edification. At times, teens withdraw to a safe place known only to themselves, and in that one moment they control, they wonder what is real. Families often search for fleeting answers, and these become band-aids on gaping wounds.

Medicalization of society also contributes to the latent erosion of the family’s confidence in its ability to effectively prepare children to live as appropriate, contributing adults in society. This “medical model” of deviance is appealing to our individualistic society and is very lucrative, but creates problems in viewing the culture as an integrated system. By designating deviance as a disorder, illness, or disease, the problem becomes that of a defective individual instead of a deficient society; possible structural or societal causes of norm violations are overlooked (Eitzen & Zinn, 2004, p. 48). In addition, medicine rather than morality is used by the medical profession as a means of social control (Eitzen & Zinn, 2004). New studies in neuroscience seek to question the legitimacy of the abundant diagnosis of ADHD in children today in relation to social control (Brym & Lie, 2007). Families become confused about their responsibilities, and the task of rearing children becomes daunting. Sound decisions become illusive, moving targets.

Consequently, families draw toward individual institutions (e.g. large churches) as opposed to dominant institutions (e.g. education) for their resources, because the lone family itself is losing the power to survive in society (Schaller, 2000). For example, by seeking help from smaller trustworthy institutions, a single mom who cannot afford music lessons for her



child can bring him to a church with a children's choir to allow him exposure to and training in music.

Although unassuming, there looms a possible latent impact for which the family is not preparing. As the family's search for socialization resources intensifies, individual institutions will gain momentum and power, competing one with another. As history demonstrates, these local establishments can become sources of social division between ideologies and economic forces (Sanderson & Alderson, 2005), creating first "paradigm wars" (Hatch, 2006, p. 326), and then compelling families to choose. When such institutions compete for the families involved, the stress can become a starting point for civil strife. As well, when family and friends are polarized by the presence of addictive process in their members, social and institutional leaders can become rigid and reductive in their thinking, neglecting the emotional dimension driving the search for the non-real. Consider this: gangs form a type of institution with its own reductive culture (Brym & Lie, 2007) that competes for resources in a community. Youth who lose their sense of connection to a family story will connect to the non-real generated by a drug-influenced culture, and family members will rise up against family members (Luke 12:51-53).

These storms will cause meaning to be lost in social disorder, darkening people's reflective capability to empathize or care. Such darkness seems to invite the worst of human behavior and suffering, and leaders will scramble to reestablish cultural meaning to procure renewed social order. However, Frankl (1959) notes that "suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning, such as the meaning of a sacrifice" (p. 113). In the Christian tradition, for example, Christ's sacrifice resonates with the highest order of meaning—structural, emotional, and spiritual—that provides a light guiding synergetic resolution. As leaders realize the loss of unifying meaning in the coming decade, unique outcomes will emerge among those who seek life-giving light (John 9:5).



#### THE SERVANT-LEADER'S EMERGING RESPONSE OF SYNERGETIC RESOLVE

As these possible social outcomes emerge, a fertile soil for appropriate use of power and leadership is tilled. The servant-leader plants good seeds in prepared social soil by serving a community's collective vision, leading many to accomplish a greater good while suspending judgment on them. Others will trust the leader whose heart is willing to submit to something greater than self—a vision or purpose of higher order that establishes that leader's authority (Fankl, 1959; Greenleaf, 2002; Hatch, 2006; Schaller, 2000). Collective vision should incorporate insightful interpretation of past experience, indigenous voice, and future developments to lead appropriately. As Greenleaf (2002) explains, "Intuition is a *feel* for patterns, the ability to generalize based on what has happened previously. . . One is at once, in every moment of time, historian, contemporary analyst, and prophet—not three separate roles" (pp. 37-39).

As leaders become aware of the threatening climate, they can take decisive actions to survive the storms. Seamen know they cannot prevent storms from happening, but they must plan, prepare, and connect with others to endure and live to tell the tale. As winds blow, servant-leaders will emerge in communities globally, like the brave who tame the sea, embodying decisive action to plan, prepare, and connect with others in these storms. They will emerge as anomalies who challenge the status quo of power-differentiated hierarchies and patriarchal assumptions (Nielsen, 1990, p. 12). Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged as an anomalous servant-leader who confounded those who held angry parochial judgments and prejudicial beliefs (King, 1988). However, I believe servant-leaders will not rise to global proportions or lead major social movements, as King did. Nor will effective servant-leaders prevent the coming social storms; but they will emerge with salient characteristics of their own that distinguish them from traditional hierarchal leaders.

In my opinion, the emergent servant-leader will think small. He or she will focus on manageable oversight and create a following of people who



trust the leader to submit to a vision of higher caring that addresses a specific occasion, location, and population (Greenleaf, 2002; Schaller, 2000). Individuals with the audacity, courage, and liberty to believe in ideas “outside the box” of the status quo will first become apparent locally. The approaching collective change will generate a ripe environment for exceptional collaborative solutions, and these gentle anomalies will combine with rising social and environmental difficulties to co-create entirely new synergistic resolutions. It will be important to watch for and recognize these agents of connection and synergy lest they arise and we, as a population, hang them upon our social crosses.

The first characteristic we should watch for is leaders who surface concerned with upholding justice and care (Held, 1995; Warren, 1997). Greenleaf tells us that “servant-leaders differ from other persons of goodwill because they act on what they believe” (2002, p. 341). These leaders will be distinguished by their focused energy applied to “transforming movement” and explicit purpose. The servant-leader will not be concerned with personal ambition, but with the edification of the less fortunate, the safety of those in harm’s way, and the inclusion of others’ inimitable gifting (Greenleaf, 2002; Held, 1995; Warren, 1997).

People do not join community due to sameness, but rather because of a history they walk and interpret together (Hauerwas, 1981). People’s proclivity in community to utilize their vital powers to adapt toward a healthier system causes leaders to emerge. Hauerwas (1981) describes Adams’ *Watership Down* (1972) as the development of a healthy, inclusive community and how appropriate leadership emerged in the character of Hazel. Great strength or political power did not make Hazel a leader; it was his foresight acquired by listening to those in the warren, his understanding of their narrative history, and his concern for even the least of their members that distinguished him as a leader who emerged from among them and served (Hauerwas, 1981).

I believe a second characteristic of transformative health will be leaders who co-create methods of community connection. Social systems



depend on containment, order, and predictability to remain stable (Brym & Lie, 2007; Kuhn, 2007). In the coming storms, social structures will experience the loss of technical control on which many populations rely. This loss of control will generate severe disruptions in the self-organizing principles of a community's cohesive meaning and communication. This likelihood paradoxically carries both devastating consequences and the hope of new unique outcomes. Without an ability to recognize connection through meaning, humanity loses a sound reflective sense of itself, consequently removing perhaps the most core motivation for civil survival—knowing and being known (Cooper, 2005, p. 1702; Kuhn, 2007. p. 165).

The “number and strength of connections between agents in the network determines the ruggedness of the landscape across which it has to move in search of fitness” (Stacey, Griffin, & Shaw, 2000, p. 113). *Social capital* is constructed in similar fashion. Sociologist John Curra (2005) explains, “It refers to the connections that people have to one another and the accompanying norms of reciprocity, shared moral values, and trust. . . . What seems clear is that social networks have value, and our lives are often made richer and more productive by strong social ties” (p. 195). Social capital provides an invisible resource that constructs a connective power of familiar relationships, recursive mores, and stable networks not necessarily dependent on technical control. In a cohesive environment, people promote adjustments, adaptations, and integration by synergetic resolution, and individuals “interact with each other for the sake of expressing their identity and thereby their differences from each other” (Stacey et al., 2000, p. 123). Interaction between individuals constructs familiarity with another's uniqueness that interfaces with the other's distinctiveness. Without a sense of distinction, one would have no value for the worth of a unique life, creating an ability to do harm without conscience. As Frankl noted, “Such people forgot that often it is just such an exceptionally difficult external situation which gives man the opportunity to grow spiritually beyond himself” (1959, p. 72).

Emerging servant-leaders will recognize this worth and will develop



and nurture cooperative interaction, community practice, and relational resolve as a primary contingent method to address disruptions in technical control that impact community function. Such preparations indicate both insight and foresight, and appropriate use of prosperous community resources to organize for leaner times. Cooperative conservation will be important for our own needs as well as for preserving connection with other people groups. In Old Testament times, as recorded in Genesis 42:1-57, Joseph interpreted the Pharaoh's dream to demonstrate God's power and glory and to prevent massive suffering. A glimpse into the future allowed leaders to take critical preventive measures that preserved not only Egypt's history, but also Israel's. Without action on the God-given insight, a seven-year famine would surely have devastated both nations. Joseph was an ordinary man who emerged to co-create an appropriate use of the prosperous status quo that invited the connection of many.

Like Joseph, the servant-leader will co-create alternative symbols to generate meaning that people can trust during a disruption to connection (Greenleaf, 2002). As Hatch notes, "A manager's role within a community of practice is one of integration rather than authority—managers look for or try to develop coherence to enable organizational action and innovation" (2006, p. 130). Community meaning and identity are preserved through effective cooperation, community practice, and relational resolve.

Many such models will emerge locally as leaders serve their specific communities. For example, the systems analysis company Business Objects began a project called Insight to use an open data system to help cities gather and generate solutions for climate change. Timmer (2007) explains, "To focus the community's intelligence, Insight will rely on public organizations to submit challenges. . . Community members themselves will evaluate and rate challenges, allowing the most interesting or worthwhile to receive the most attention, and possibly, receive financial grants to reward successful completion" (p. 2). Business Objects helps these communities correlate new solutions and recognize their current resources, which facili-



tates new connections and empowers a community to trust one another in the unique outcome of cooperation.

A third characteristic of servant-leaders will be that they attend to the emotional content of people they serve. They will co-construct enduring meanings that connect community members before, during, and after social paradigm shifts. Jacqueline Adams (2003) used ethnographic interviews to quantify the powerful emotional influence on the people involved in social movements. She wrote, "A movement arouses very turbulent emotions in that movement's members. . .the end of a movement often leaves its members feeling bitter" (p. 105). After a successful political struggle in Chile, women who worked in Chilean arpillera craft workshops lost functioning connection as well as shared bonding experiences. This disconnectedness left them feeling bitter toward leaders who had failed to consider their emotional investment in a victorious revolution, much as leaders in New Orleans missed caring for emotionally devastated people who lost homes, family members, and livelihood.

The progression of social storms will affect social movements for individuals, families and institutions, stirring emotions of loss, confusion, and anger. Regarding family reality, Clark (2004) notes that "the primary preoccupation of mid-adolescents is to find a place of relational safety" (p. 63). Emotions organize the practice and reification of relationships (Wenger, 1998). Affection is the appropriate exchange of emotional content that builds within another a true sense of safety, value, unity, and rhythm. Social systems use emotions as an organizational principle. "For many researchers, affect is essentially a social signal. The purpose of the expression of emotion is considered to be social communication" (Siegel, 1999, p. 128). Emotions contribute to the meaningful construction of community life and connect us to larger realities. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. called Western societies to grave remorse for trampling over a billion black brothers and sisters, and to repentance for being capable of treating people in such a manner. His dream was a movement from the chaotic relational state



that this treatment created in both parties to a more appropriate interaction of caring order (King, 1988).

When chaos surfaces, we experience an arousing resonance of anxiety, loss, grief, regret, anger, and depression—we experience a form of sorrow. Sorrow provides an important flow of emotional resonance among people that declares value and meaning within our social world and personal narratives. Without this painful form of emotional resonance, there would be no meaning. In suffering the pain of sorrow, we are laden with a weight we seek to eradicate, avoid, or overcome. We change in the light of resonating sorrow. These moments of emotional disorder inform our nature to seek, value, and cherish the greater collective meaning and the spiritual light to which Christ invites us. Events causing sorrow provide the emotional energy, passion, and perseverance that motivate us to change our future (Siegel, 2007). The emerging servant-leader will sense the sorrow of a community and reify meanings with appropriate memorials.

The servant-leader will also address people's emotions in the coming disorder with empathetic connections. To regulate emotions in complex matters, one must first *validate* what another is experiencing, such as a lack of safety. Affirmation of another's feelings promotes emotional and mental healing (Siegel, 2007, p. 199), while an inappropriate reaction creates further damage (Siegel, 1999; 2003). Next, the leader must *suspend judgment* concerning the person served in order to fully listen to the emotional content presented. The leader then provides an *invitation* to closeness or further communication to learn relational resources. This process builds symbols of meaning into bonding experiences that define the relationship. To give and to answer invitation is one of the sweetest and most satisfying of all connections—both parties are connected because they want to be. There is little question of belonging. The leader constructs and practices *connections of meaning* from bonding experiences, past contexts, and shared community rituals. Empathetic connections interweave validation, suspended judgment, invitation, and meaningful connection to support the emotional dynamic of



the community. Members can then feel free to contribute to the unifying purposes that allow for corollary outcomes (Adams, 2003; Siegel, 2007).

The fourth characteristic will be seen in the servant-leader's ability to vitalize a narrative process in his or her community. The approaching social changes will disrupt the identity of individual communities and generate the loss of progressive organizational culture (Hatch, 2006; Sanderson & Alderson, 2005). It can begin simply. For example, if adolescents believe no one knows who they truly are, this disconnects them from their own supporting social network, making escapism an appealing option in order to find some control. This isolation prevents a progressive synergetic cooperation and causes communities to fragment. Consider this in light of the non-real escapism in drug use reported about thousands of high school students.

Societies are held together by the meanings assigned to their stories, and those meanings bring legitimacy to social order (Griffin, 2002; Wenger, 1997). Communities are ever-expanding social constructs that require attention to this progressive process. When two groups interact, they destabilize each other by demanding higher functioning and attunement (Siegel, 2007, p. 167). Their future is forever changed, unpredictable in the variety of resolutions they will assemble to establish novel order and balance. As Griffin asserts, "Ethical conduct requires individuals to participate in continuous interaction with each other, in which they create the meaning of their interaction" (2002, p. 58). As two groups come together "disorder is used to create new structure" (Stacey et al., p. 94). When the resonance becomes familiar, they co-create a narrative that attributes meaning, value, and commitments around their shared memories (Siegel, 1999). Their narrative holds their meaning. The emerging servant-leader will not only hold story as his or her own, but will also artistically be a teller of the community's story.

Current leaders are inviting young people into the practice of connection. Alison King (1994) presented a study in which third and fourth graders were taught to ask questions from their own knowledge framework to strengthen connections between their own narrative and the lesson. She



explained that “those self-generated inferences, elaborations, and relationships are personally meaningful and anchored in that individual’s own experience” (1994, p. 339). These practices prepare youth to remain connected by utilizing the social capital in their own narrative contexts and group connections. This is so because

as fundamental creations of social experience, stories embody human behavior and the consequences of deviations from the cultural norm. Stories also captivate our attention, in that they require us to participate in the active construction of the mental lives and experiences of the characters. In this way story is created by both teller and listener. (Siegel, 1999, p. 60)

The servant-leader will be a sower of story and will realize we cannot only teach children; we must be a part of their story and they must be a part of ours.

#### CONCLUSION

Servant-leaders will emerge locally with specific burdens to utilize their community’s vital powers to adapt to increased social complexity. Jesus issued a warning to his disciples to be watchful during the times of social division, when matters darken (Luke 12:1-53), and it is reasonable to realize that we should watch for the servant to emerge from diverse environments, whether from disaster-laden areas or gated communities. These emerging servants will be recognized by their interest in protecting the less privileged in a community and in establishing the stability of a social system. They are already abundant among us and will rise amid chaos to generate a new order that transforms communities.

Connection requires a conscience of caring. Like Joseph, servant-leaders could ascend to distinct positions to stimulate this new consciousness in the storm. As Jesus said, we can easily see the obvious coming storms, but we can also see the latent emergence of leaders with unique skills to bring people together by the authority of story, by empathetically connecting



them, and by empowering cooperation. We will witness these leaders beginning in small groups to ensure success and provide observable illustrations of synergetic resolution.

Each one of the emerging leader's four characteristics builds on and depends upon the others. Servant-leaders (and those preparing them) have before them a tremendous task of design, training, and practice if transformational communities are to develop and withstand the winds of the approaching social storms. From this forecast, I propose further research be developed to prepare communities to recognize at least these four characteristics of leaders of connection and synergy as they appropriately emerge. In view of the imminence of these events, how ought we to serve as leaders? And how will we recognize the anomalies of change that create corollary outcomes and solutions not yet invented? In the end, valued leadership will not be who we have become as individuals, but rather who, and what, and how we have become together.

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