ENACTING SERVANT-LEADERSHIP FROM THE INSIDE OUT

—MICHAEL BELL AND SYLVIA HABEL

DEVELOPING SERVANT-LEADERS

The Character of the Servant-Leader

From the very conception of the term, writing about servant-leadership was focused on the individual who would be leader (Greenleaf, 1970). This defining feature, the focus on the servant-leader's character, is at the core of ongoing research (Laub, 1999; Abel, 2000; Russell, 2001; Russell & Stone, 2002; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Patterson, 2003; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004; Page & Wong, 2003, 2005), and this paper proposes a way toward developing a servant-leader's character through deliberate action, thinking, and visioning.

The discussion and research on servant-leadership have yielded a considerable list of attributes. Servant-leaders have personal awareness, foresight (Spears, 1998, pp. 4–5), and a willingness to learn; they are honest, are open and accountable (Laub, 1999), value differences, and take joy in the success of others. The very concept of servant-leadership is based on the values of humility and respect for others. Servant-leaders possess an ethic of service that is central to their belief system and so provides significant personal fulfillment (Abel, 2000, p. 83).

Page and Wong (2003) proposed a model for the measurement of servant-leadership that divides the leader's activities into four domains. These domains are titled according to their orientation (see Table 1). The first domain refers to the Character Orientation of the servant-leader and is concerned with cultivating a servant's attitude, focusing on the leader's values, credibility, and motives. The subsequent domains describe relating to others (People Orientation), getting the job done (Task Orientation), and interaction with and impact on the processes and structures of the organization (Process Orientation).

213

Table 1

Attributes According to Their Domains

Domain	Focus	Attributes	
I. Character Orientation (Being—What kind of person is the leader?)	Concerned with cultivating a servant's attitude, focusing on the leader's values, credibility, and motive	Integrity Humility Honesty Accountability Willingness to learn Belief and trust in people Valuing difference	Openness Servanthood Taking joy in the Success of others Self-awareness
II. People Orientation (Relating—How does the leader relate to others?)	Concerned with developing human resources, focusing on the leader's relationship with people and his/her commitment to developing others	Caring for others Empowering others Developing others Trust Credibility Building relationships Building up through affirmation Appreciation of others Service Listening receptively	Communication Encouragement

III. Task Orientation (Doing—What does the leader do?)	Concerned with achieving productivity and success, focusing on the leader's tasks and skills necessary for success	Visioning Goal setting Leading Take initiative Clarify goals Empowerment Teaching Competence	Visibility Influence Work collaboratively Persuasion Envision the future
IV. Process Orientation (Organizing—How does the leader impact organizational processes?)	Concerned with increasing the efficiency of the organization, focusing the leader's ability to model and develop a flexible, efficient, and open system	Team building Shared decision making Share the power Model appropriate behavior Share the status Share the vision Modeling Pioneering Stewardship Delegation	

Adapted from Page and Wong, 2005, p. 3; Russell and Stone, 2002, p. 147; Laub, 2005; Spears, 1998, pp. 4–7; Sendjaya and Sarros, 2002, p. 60, Patterson, 2003; and Abel, 2000, p. 84.

Table 1 includes the attributes listed by the authors listed thus far in this paper without repetition.

While these attributes provide a clear description of the servant-leader in action, they do not provide a framework for understanding how the domains or attributes interact. Stone et al. (2004) describe all servant-leadership activity as emanating from the character of the servant-leader. Thus, the servant-leader's character is at the core of each relationship, activity, and interaction with the organization. Page and Wong (2003, p. 4) see the servant-leader's heart and character as central to successful servant-leadership in action.

Given the centrality of character in servant-leadership, it would be useful if we had an effective method for developing the necessary character. The purpose of this study was to establish the usefulness of an approach to deliberately progressing my character toward a congruent enactment of servant-leadership in my context. To do so, a model for defining character in action and a process for progressing the congruence of that character in action were needed. Further, the congruence needed to be testable both internally (from my point of view) and externally (from the point of view of those on my team).

The research process used Glasser's Choice Theory Model (Glasser, 2005) to provide an approach that is well matched with the intentions of servant-leaders. It is highly relational in nature and provides for self-awareness and self-evaluation for the servant-leader. The self-evaluation through reflection and questioning provided for in Glasser's model became integral to the success of this project. It also provided a process for progressing a person's character. We will look at this model next.

In this study, a single case study design was followed with the primary aim of self-assessment, in which I sought to pursue servant-leadership character development. In the pursuit of my own character development, I included fourteen teacher-volunteers and one Choice Theory coach to help broaden and deepen my own character development, as well as corresponding applications for theory and practice.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHOICE THEORY MODEL

The following discussion refers to elements of Figure 1, which is an adaptation of Glasser's model. Much of it is simplified for the sake of clarity in this discussion. For ease of reading, the diagram is numbered with corresponding explanations. Glasser (1984) argues that behavior arises as a response to internal needs in the first instance, rather than to external events.
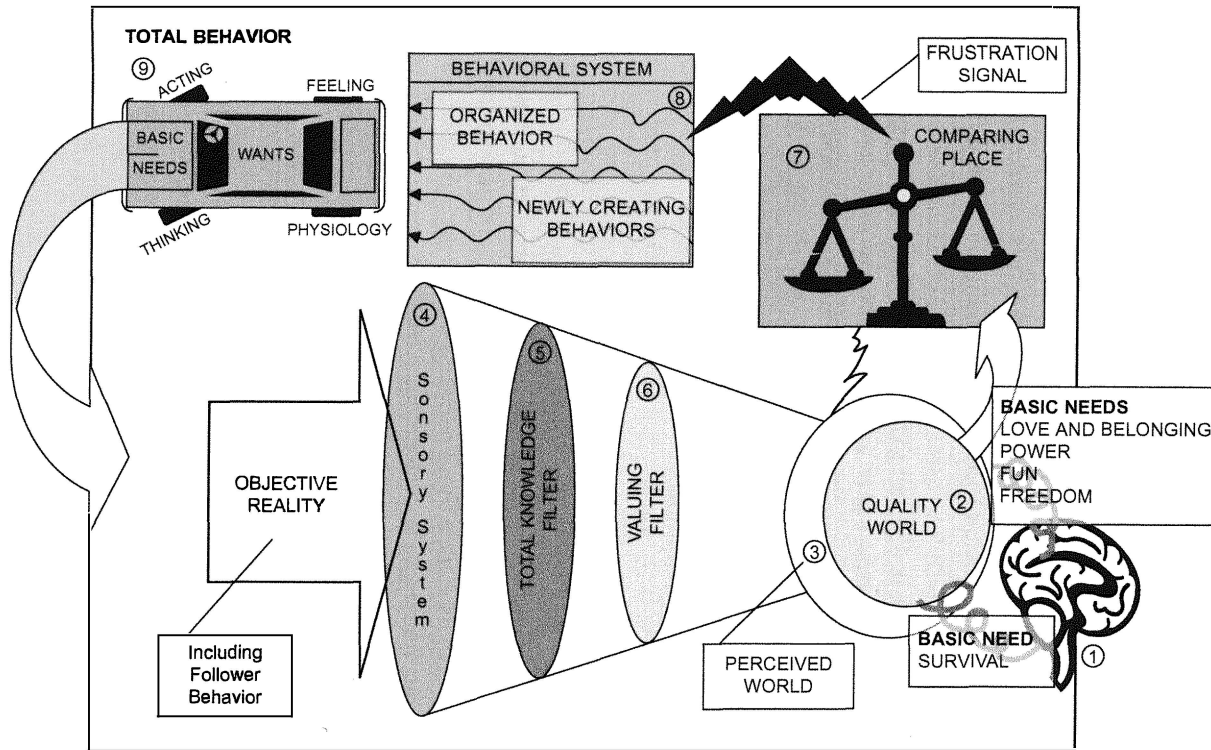
216

Figure 1: Choice Theory Model (Adapted from Glasser, 2005)

These needs drive our behavior as we attempt to find ways to satisfy them. These needs include an old brain need (Survival) and four psychological needs located in the new brain (1). These four needs are Love and Belonging, Power, Fun, and Freedom. Each of us has these needs hardwired into our genetic structure, but the strength of the needs varies from one individual to another. Below is a description of each need.

Survival refers to maintaining the basic bodily functions. This requires food, water, and shelter, and the means for providing them. *Love and Belonging* relates to our sense of closeness and connectedness with others (Glasser, 1998). We derive our sense of love and belonging through interaction with other individuals and groups. *Power* is the need to feel important and recognized (Peterson, 2000, p. 43), not to have control over other people. It relates to accomplishment and a sense of worth. *Freedom* refers to a sense of having control over our lives. It relates to choice, and Peterson (2000, p. 44) argues that people respond better to situations in which they have a choice. *Fun* and learning are associated with one another. Individuals seeking fun seek a sense of childlike play—the kind of fun had as our curiosity is satisfied through active experimentation.

Quality World (2)

We are born with the needs hardwired into us, but we begin to learn how to satisfy those needs as children. The images of people, objects, and activities that help us satisfy those needs as a child are stored in our Quality World. Obvious images may include our parents, fun activities in which we have participated, objects related to a sense of accomplishment, or images of us in our favorite outfit. These images will be referred to as Quality World Images (QWI) on occasions in this paper.

While these images are first stored when we are children, they are not static. They can be added to as life experiences provide us with further and alternative images. The leader's capacity to evaluate and add images to his/her Quality World allows the leader's needs to be met without enslaving the leader to his/her past or the actions of others.

Perceived World (3)

The images are placed in our Quality World as we experience new ways in which our needs are met. The more images we have for meeting

each need stored in our Quality World, the more resourceful we are (Peterson, 2000, p. 45).

Experiencing new ways of meeting our needs occurs through information that is passed through the Sensory System (4). This information is filtered through the Total Knowledge.

Filter (5), where we determine if the information is useful, possibly useful, or useless. It then moves through our Valuing Filter (6), where we determine whether it is positive or negative, pleasurable, painful, or neutral, based on our values (Peterson, 2000, pp. 45–46). The information is then stored in our Perceived World. It is also stored in our Quality World if it meets one or more of our basic needs in a strong, positive, and pleasurable way.

Subsequent information that moves through our Perceptual System (the label given to both filters) is sent from our Perceived World to our Comparing Place. (7) In our Comparing Place we compare images of what we have got (the information just received) with what we want (the images stored in our Quality World). An imbalance in our Comparing Place motivates behavior to restore the balance. We seek a match between what we want and what we've got, because what we want meets one or more of our needs.

Behavioral System (8)

If we have an imbalance in our Comparing Place, our brain sends a frustrated signal to our Behavioral System. Behavior is chosen based on its past effectiveness in helping us get what we want (receive information through our perceptual system that matches images in our Quality World). If the existing repertoire of behaviors is no longer effective, the individual can create new behaviors to help do the job (Peterson, 2000, p. 46).

Total Behavior (9)

For Glasser (1984), Total Behavior has four components: action, thinking, feeling, and physiology. Any behavior has all four components working simultaneously. The components can be seen in Figure 1 as a car. The rear wheels represent feelings and physiology. These components are difficult to control directly. The front wheels represent thinking and action, which are easier to control consciously. The front wheels, thinking and acting, can direct the car and change the direction or move the car down another road.

What steers the front wheels are the wants (images) in our Quality World. And what powers the car are the needs.

The model provides the clearest indication of the congruence of one's vision, acting, and thinking. Comfortable, positive feelings and the absence of uncomfortable physiology indicate congruence and effective behavior. Both acting and thinking are obvious points of intervention, and wanting (related to images in our Quality World) is also adjustable.

Finally, the behavior may result in changes in the Real World, thus completing the loop. These changes are processed through the Perceptual System and stored in the Perceived World, and the new information is compared to see if a balance in the Comparing Place has been restored.

ALIGNING THE SERVANT-LEADER'S CHARACTER

All of the attributes from Table 1 were placed more consistently in the researcher's Quality World through this project. In many cases my understanding of these attributes grew as well. The pursuit of congruence meant that thinking, acting, and wanting in the enactment of honesty and openness, a willingness to learn, and taking joy in the success of others became more integrated with the other values of servant-leadership. To illustrate the avenues for change in each of these attributes that were trialed in the research, this paper will use the attribute of humility. Humility is a central characteristic of the servant-leader and it must be integrated with each aspect of total behavior in a servant-leader's itinerary.

My working definition of humility progressed considerably during the study. Initially, it was defined as "deferring one's own needs and perceptions in an interaction in deference to the needs and perceptions of others." Eventually, the working definition of humility became "meeting one's own needs through helping others to grow in their capacity to meet their own needs. This included using dialogue and questions to evaluate the perceptions of all involved in leadership interactions." To illuminate the notion further, the discussion will now turn to humility as a total behavior.

Understanding Total Behavior

Figure 2 illustrates the Choice Theory Model of Total Behavior and a tool for change that has been overlaid to illustrate the relationship. In essence, the Quality World images are referred to as WANTS. The Basic
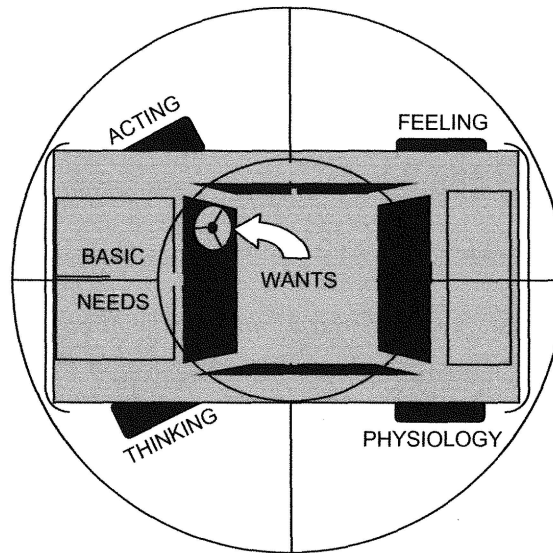
Figure 2: Understanding Total Behavior

Needs are met through behaviors (Thoughts, Actions) that produce results that get us what we want. Thus, the WANTS steer the behavior.

An obvious point of intervention is the WANTS. So as the would-be servant-leader decides that being humble is a prerequisite for success, he/she then wants, at least in theory, to be humble.

For both Page and Wong (2003, p. 7) and Choice Theorists, the humility has to be genuine and within the character (not an act). For Glasser (2005), the attribute must be in the Quality World to be truly part of the individual. We have many ideas in our Perceived World, some of which appear to be appealing. Advocating them may indeed meet our needs as well. For example, advocating humility as a useful characteristic for leaders may help us meet our need for belonging with a certain group, but if manipulating followers to conform is part of Quality World images for meeting our need for power, then we will have trouble living out our advocated values (e.g., humility). Further trouble arises for the individual who is unaware of the images in his/her Quality World. Thus the cry, "I don't know why I keep doing that!"

So deciding to be humble alone is not enough. How does the servant-leader, hoping to be humble, know if humility is part of his/her Quality World? According to Glasser, quality always feels good (1994, p. 23).

While a potential servant-leader acts as if he/she is humble, the physiological response will be telling another story. Nervousness, unease, a sense of discomfort will express itself involuntarily in the servant-leader's physiology. Only behaviors that are within a person's Quality World will produce a comfortable physiological response.

Methods

With this project, I set out to determine a way of progressing my character toward a closer alignment with the attributes of the servant-leader's character as defined by the literature (Table 1). Character congruence was defined as an alignment between wanting, thinking, and acting as experienced in an absence of uncomfortable physiology for the researcher. Through a process of planning, acting, and evaluating, the questions that assisted with increasing congruence were identified. These questions, based in the Choice Theory model, became the process through which higher levels of congruence were attained.

I was in a role as a statewide consultant to teachers beginning their work in the Catholic system. I had regular interactions with 120 teachers spread across a vast geographical area. The contact was face-to-face, electronic, and by telephone. Fourteen of these teachers accepted the invitation to respond to a repeated survey concerning my leadership behaviors.

Over a six-month period, multiple iterations of the action research cycle were made, with careful journal recording of the planning, acting, and reflecting stages. A cycle of deliberately planning to use the behaviors of a servant-leader (as defined by Page and Wong, 2005) in various contexts of everyday leadership while observing and reflecting on the thinking and physiology experienced during those interactions provided one set of data for the project. The questions and techniques of Choice Theory provided the tools for achieving closer alignment. The experience of uncomfortable physiology was the trigger to record a character journal.

To triangulate the data, a modified version of Page and Wong's Revised Servant Leader Profile (2005) was used to survey the fourteen teachers who had interacted with the researcher in a servant-follower relationship over that time. There were two rounds of surveys taken—one at the three-month mark and one again at the end. The results of these surveys were reflected on as part of the journal process and analyzed for a mismatch with the researcher's perceptions of events.

An answer to the question, "What processes support the development of character congruence?" presupposes that the processes resulted in a higher level of character congruence, as was intended. The analysis of the data suggested that the processes outlined below were associated with:

1. decreasing the incidence of uncomfortable physiological responses during my interactions with teachers; and
2. increasing focus, motivation, and action to achieve my personal vision.

The analysis of the survey responses indicated that the followers involved found my behaviors to be a good match for the survey items under the domains of relationships and tasks. Table 2 collates those results. In both rounds 1 and 2 I achieved a mean of 4.07 on a 1–5 Likert scale where 5 was Strongly Agree. This external measurement of my success as a servant-leader coupled with my feeling of congruence in interactions with those surveyed indicates that I was a congruent and effective servant-leader in these contexts.

It is clear, then, that the study was successful in its aim to produce a more congruent enactment of servant-leadership. Thus, the processes described in the next section delineate the major findings of this project and provide a roadmap for other would-be servant-leaders and coaches.

It is important to note that I had access to a Choice Theory coach who acted as both a critical friend and a consultant during times of confusion and frustration. The coach used the techniques and questions that follow to help me reach clarity during those times.

Table 2
Results of Surveys—Rounds 1 and 2

	Round 1		Round 2		t [13]
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Relationships	63.4	6.8	62.6	5.3	0.49
Tasks	78.5	9.2	78.6	9.3	0.04
Overall	4.07	1.3	4.07	0.7	0.05

Choosing Character—Becoming Truly Humble

The following section describes the process used in the research to progress to an authentic situating of humility in my Quality World, building effective behaviors for meeting the image of the humble leader and expanding my capacity to remain humble in challenging situations.

Figure 3 contains an example of a planning journal. This planning was used with most of the attributes in Table 1 and is described below. I started in the middle of the circle by identifying the servant-leader I wanted to be.

There were some images for most of the attributes from Table 1 in my Quality World prior to the research. The challenge was to clarify, prioritize, and expand those images to ensure that I consistently acted in an
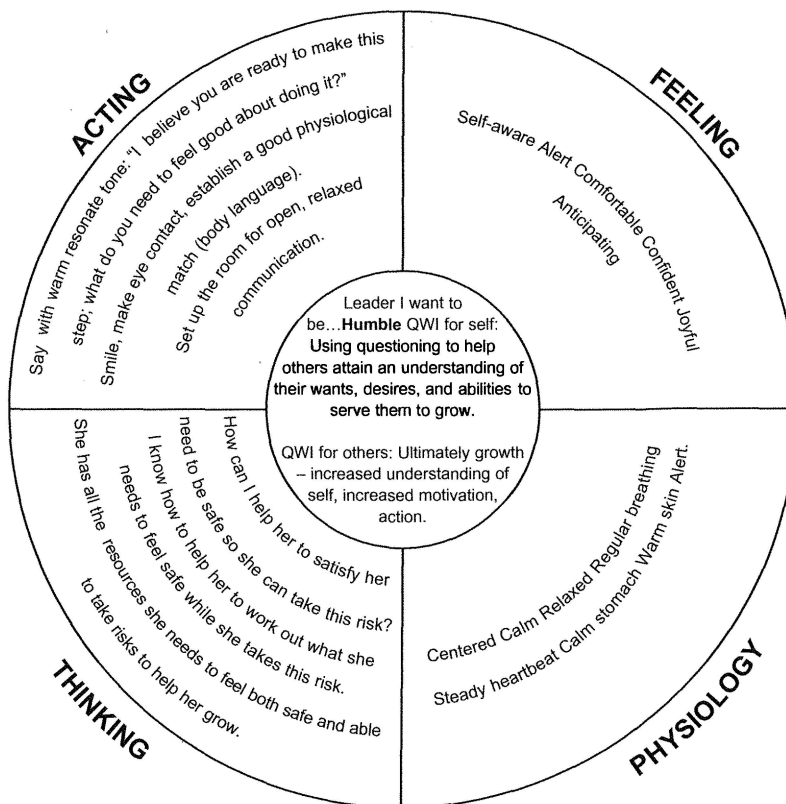

Figure 3: The ideal me—working with Total Behavior—Boffey (1997)

attempt to get a match for them in my behavior and the responses of my team. Increased self-awareness is a natural outcome of the process.

Having chosen a characteristic to develop, I then moved to Quadrant 1 (Feeling) and described how I would feel if I were being the leader I wanted to be. Remembering that quality feels good, the corresponding feelings would be positive and pleasant (see examples in Figure 3). Following this description, Quadrant 2 (Physiology) was completed. Physiological responses often go unnoticed. For the servant-leader, tuning into these responses provides critical information about his/her character development. When people act in accord with their Quality World images, they may notice what feels at first like an absence of physiological responses. The likely responses (still present but subtle in nature) are described in Figure 3. The act of noticing one's physiological responses will be called "checking in" in this paper.

After Quadrants 1 and 2 had been completed, the Thinking and Acting Quadrants were described. It was important to be as accurate, genuine, and comprehensive as possible with these quadrants. The thinking and acting behaviors were contextual in nature. Context changes are flagged by a change of people, people's behaviors, place, or events. In this case the context was in response to a teacher who was struggling with her students' behavior and needed to take some risks (as she saw them) to get on top of this aspect of her work.

In the Thinking Quadrant I included thoughts about self, others, and the world (generalizations). These served as ways to prepare for various interactions and as a test to see if the ultimate action taken is consistent with those thoughts.

Having completed the wheel, I was ready for action. This was the testing stage of the process. I stepped forward into action and one of the first signals was a response in my physiology. When the signal felt good, then I was confident that the attribute and the action and thinking were all congruent.

However, this was a process for growing and expanding both character and behaviors, and if the attribute, behavior, or context was new, I experienced stronger physiological responses. When I received a physiological message (e.g., nervous stomach), then this signal told me some important information. Checking in here helped me to know how best to proceed. If the signal was nervousness or excitement, then it was appropriate to carry on. This response indicates that the behavior or the context was unfamiliar. Over several repetitions, the signals decreased as the behavior or context became familiar.

However, if there were other attendant responses (e.g., frustration, hot skin), one of several things was determined to be out of alignment. I developed a six-step process in response to uncomfortable physiology that allowed for increased congruence. This process included:

1. Questions used to understand uncomfortable physiological responses.
2. Techniques used for reading physiological responses.
3. Questions for prioritizing needs/wants.
4. Questions used to help evaluate and expand quality world images.
5. Developing a Total Behavior Plan.
6. Questions to help build "State."

On experiencing the uncomfortable physiology, I used the questions in Table 3 to check in. The first five questions are overtly linked to the five basic needs. When asking these questions, I found another physiological response affirmed the question, or an increased or continued uncomfortable response negated the question.

So although my determination was to want, act, and think in a way that was congruent with humility, this needed to be done while meeting the presenting need added a layer of complexity to my internal world.

Table 3

Questions Used to Understand Uncomfortable Physiological Responses

Understanding Physiological Responses
1. Do I need to feel more connected? (love and belonging)
2. Do I need to be free to...? (freedom)
3. Am I feeling safe, organized, on top? (survival)
4. Do I feel useful, recognized or effective? (power)
5. Do I need some fun, to be stretched, inspired? (fun and learning)

Do I need some fun, to be stretched, inspired? (fun and learning)
1. What do I need?
2. What is this feeling about specifically?
3. What do I think it is telling me?
4. When have I had this physiology/feeling before?
5. Is this a response to a new situation/plan or action? (nerves/excitement)?

It required a sorting of the three elements (wanting, thinking, and acting) to allow the attribute to remain present regardless of my need profile. Recognizing which need was presenting was a step toward that end.

There were occasions upon which these questions did not yield ready answers. Deeper investigation was needed and the following techniques (Table 4) helped to identify the thinking and feeling, which often helped to identify the need or want underlying the physiology.

Having identified the need that was presenting at that time, I could take further self-control by asking questions that helped prioritize the needs meeting. It is common human behavior to reprioritize our needs-meeting behaviors. Managers often delay needed sleep or food breaks to get the job done. This might be a reprioritizing of survival in favour of the power need.

Obviously, reprioritizing needs has its limits. It is our contention that not meeting one's need is neither healthy nor productive. The shift of state that occurs through effectively meeting one's needs provides an increased level of resourcefulness and satisfaction. So getting enough sleep, eating healthily, connecting with others, finding ways to be effective and useful, learning, and meeting the need for freedom will put the leader in a better place to serve others. In effect, servant-leading ourselves enables us to better servant-lead others.

Controlling my state through careful needs meeting was found to be a critical in terms achieving congruence in multiple contexts, especially when planning my behavior and thinking were not possible. Table 5 includes the questions used to help determines priorities. Most of these questions can be answered while in the context.

Table 4
Techniques Used for Reading Physiological Responses

Reading Physiology
1. Relive the situation (Visual, Auditory, and Kinaesthetic) and then ask: "What am I thinking about the world? What do I think of others? What am I thinking about myself?"
2. Model possible responses based on likeliness ("I am feeling X and therefore could be thinking 1,2,3...")
3. 3rd person scenario the situation—what might others do/think in this situation?
4. Push it to the extreme ("I'm frustrated—if I were furious it would be because...")

Table 5

Questions for Prioritizing Needs/Wants (Wubbolding, 2000)

1. Can I agree to meet this need/want later/in another way/in another context?
2. Would it be most helpful for me to pursue meeting this need/want here and now?
3. Do I need to stop what I am doing to meet this need and then come back to this situation?
4. Could I change/expand my QWIs for meeting this need in this context?

So while the need can be reprioritized for a while, at some point meeting the need will require prioritizing. My need for freedom is consistently high. It presents in many situations over a normal day, so having a range of Quality World Images for freedom that work across multiple contexts (meetings, daily tasks, personal interactions, routines) is important in terms of sustaining needs satisfaction.

A perceived threat to my freedom could have resulted in reactive responses that put aside humility. At these times, some deeper personal growth was needed. In this study, personal growth was achieved through careful self-evaluation. The evaluation of one's own QWIs can be disconcerting, as many of these are intimately connected with one's beliefs about oneself, others, and the world at large.

I was occasionally confronted with behavior in others that had a strong corresponding physiological response within me. Recognizing that this response was being caused not by the other person, but by that person's behavior not matching my QWIs at the time, allowed me to do some careful self-evaluation before proceeding. Table 6 outlines the questions that I used.

Frequently, leaders are charged to lead change, so a perceived resistance to change from a team member can be a challenge to the leader's sense of effectiveness. The first question in the table asked me to consider my own thinking. Resistance, of course, is a legitimate response to a change that appears to threaten the individual involved. Thus, resistance may well be the first sign in another's behavior that change is coming. If one's images for oneself as an effective leader only include people being enthusiastic when a new idea is suggested, then resistance is not a QWI. It could be though, and

228

Table 6
*Questions Used to Help Evaluate and Expand Quality World Images
(adapted from Wubbolding, 2000) Questions in italics can be answered
in context*

Evaluating and Expanding Quality World Images
1. Can I include a person's current response to me as QWI for what I want?
2. What might the person's behavior mean? (Labeling)
3. How would I see myself acting/thinking so that I am embodying this QWI?
4. Is what I want desirable or realistic?
5. Is there a real chance of getting it in the near or distant future?
6. How likely is it that the world around me will change to meet my desires?
7. How possible is it to make the changes in my own behavior that I want to make?
8. Is there anyone around to whom I want to be closer?

question 1 opens that possibility and offers the leader the opportunity to feel
effective in the face of this reaction.

A leader might perceive resistance and move immediately to labeling
that person as "a dinosaur" or "retired at their desk." The label helps leaders
justify other responses like, "There's no point in trying to work with X," or
more coercive responses like, "If you don't get on board with this one, you
can say goodbye to your job!"

Question 2 promotes further interrogation of one's own thinking and
acting. It presupposes that all behavior is a message and asks the leader to
look beyond the label to the messages that the behavior could be sending.
I found that resistance often meant, "I don't feel safe because I don't have
the tools to cope with this new change" or "I'm not on board because I can't
see how this will meet any of my needs." Each of these messages requires a
different response of the leader, not the follower.

Question 3 recognizes the possibility that the leader may not get a
match for his/her images at that time. In this case the leader is not con-
demned to feel ineffective. If that were so, the servant-leader would be at
the mercy of others' responses and riding peaks and troughs that are deter-
mined by them. By deliberately cultivating images of oneself, by acting in
certain ways that are congruent with servant-leadership, the servant-leader
takes back control of his/her own capacity to feel effective and to self-soothe
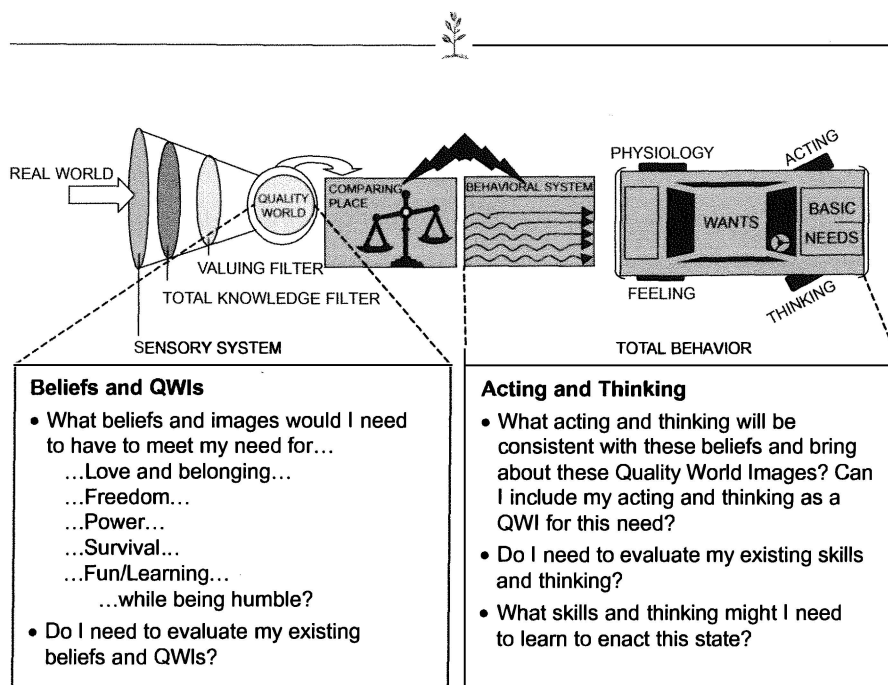
Figure 4: Questions to Help Build State

when others are not on board. These strategies allowed me to remain humble and determined, and therefore without a need to coerce others into behaving in certain ways to make me feel better.

In order to remain consistently humble, regardless of the context or the need presenting at the time, the servant-leader will need to have QWIs for humility linked to every need and be able to choose a range of acting and thinking behaviors that are consistent with humility. Figure 4 contains the questions that I developed in order to create and sustain a state of humility in this project. However, they could also be used to develop the other attributes described in Table 7.

The state of humility simply cannot be aligned with a single need. Humble behaviors may be the result of multiple needs in combination. Below, the relationship between each need and the attribute of humility for the researcher is outlined.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

I planned to use the components of Page and Wong's Revised Servant Leadership Profile (2003) in the context of my work to enact servant-leadership. These enactments resulted in certain physiological responses that allowed me to interrogate my internal world using the techniques

230

Table 7

Beliefs About How Humility Meets Each of the Needs

Humility	
Need	How humility serves that need
Survival	Humility helps build a legacy, thus allowing a kind of transpersonal (rather than personal) survival and stewardship.
Power	The act of humility allows/ensures the growth of the other—the most powerful effect one human being can have.
Love and Belonging	Humility provides for true connection, not limited by false images of bravado; vulnerability provides for an authentic mutual interaction.
Freedom	Humility allows independence from constraints of response to attack from others (criticism), allowing the servant-leader to remain the leader he/she wants to be.
Fun and Learning	Because of the above, humility provides constant opportunities to enjoy self and others, and to be constantly learning about self and others.

described above. These techniques, used over time, allowed me to reduce my uncomfortable physiological responses to virtually nil in both planned and unplanned circumstances. This was taken to indicate an alignment of my character with that of the servant-leader's character as defined by the literature. The surveys of those led, support this finding.

The deliberate adherence to specific actions (those described by the RSLP) is critical to the enactment of servant-leadership on two counts. It is through action that the servant-leadership process occurs, and it is through action that the servant-leader can register his or her character congruence.

I found that many of the techniques I used on myself were consequently useful when working with the members of my team. They provided a means for enabling others to access their own visions and align their thinking and acting for more satisfying outcomes. These tools provide the servant-leader with the capacity to help others in three of Senge's five disciplines (personal mastery, mental models, and shared vision) (2006).

This research was intended as a case study to pioneer the development of a character expansion approach for servant-leaders. This research has established processes for moving beyond the chance of attributes appearing in one's character simply because of time, maturity, or experiences. Thus, the road toward a congruent enactment of servant-leadership becomes available to anyone who should wish to travel it, regardless of his or her starting point.

The help of an informed coach was invaluable in this study. While the processes and techniques used have been documented here, the external perspective of a coach remains helpful in the discernment of thinking, acting, or visioning that needs further evaluation or expansion. Consequently, training coaches in the techniques of reality therapy would be helpful as a way of supporting developing leaders.

The methods used provide a process for other servant-leaders to adopt as they look for ways to further their own development as leaders. Additional research to consolidate this approach is necessary. While I found it useful within this context, establishment of the processes for leadership development generally could be useful to the field of leadership development.

These methods could easily be translated into a program for the development of a cohort of leaders across an organization. With the help of a trained coach, clear parameters of servant-leadership in action, and a shared program of peer and self-evaluation, a group of leaders could expand the use of servant-leadership organization widely in a sustainable way.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Michael Bell has twenty years' experience in education, consulting, and professional training for both corporate and educational organizations. He has worked in schools from early learning through to the tertiary sector. He has had senior leadership appointments in an International School. He now works part-time at Flinders University in the Masters of Education (Leadership and Management) program and consults within his business partnership (Leading Potential) on bringing about whole school change and developing sustainable leadership practices.

Sylvia Habel is well versed in mental health, well-being and human behavior issues. Her senior leadership experience in schools and at system level has put her in a position where she is widely consulted about complex problems needing immediate resolution and insight. Sylvia supports others to build the capacity to develop their own situation-specific solutions.

She works in an educational consultancy partnership (Leading Potential) coaching leaders and developing middle management leadership capacity. She is president of the William Glasser Institute.

———

REFERENCES

Abel, A. T. (2000). *The characteristics, behaviours and effective environments of servant leaders: A Delphi Study.* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Boffey, D. (1993). *Reinventing yourself: A control theory approach to becoming the person you want to be.* Chapel Hill: New View Publications.

Glasser, W. (1984). *Control theory.* New York: Harper and Row.

———. (1994). *The control theory manager.* New York: Harper Business.

———. (1998). *Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom.* New York: Harper Collins.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness.* Indianapolis: Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership.

———. (1970). *The servant as leader.* Indianapolis: Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership.

Laub, J. A. (1999). *Assessing the servant organization: Development of the servant organizational leadership (SOLA) instrument.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida Atlantic University.

Laub, J. (2005). Six key areas of servant leadership. Retrieved September 23, 2005, from http://www.olagroup.com/index.cfm.

Page, D., & Wong, P. T. P. (2003). Servant leadership: An opponent-process model and the revised servant leadership profile. Retrieved May 5, 2006, from http://www.regent.edu/acad/sls/publications/conference_proceedings/servant_leadership_roundtable/2003/pdf/wong_servant_leadership.pdf.

———, (2005). A conceptual framework for measuring servant-leadership. Retrieved April 29, 2009, from http://www.twu.ca/academics/graduate/leadership/servant-leadership/conceptual-framework.pdf.

Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Regent University, Virginia Beach.

Peterson, A. V. (2000, Spring). Choice theory and reality therapy. *TCA Journal, 28*(1), 41–49.

Russell, R. F. (2001). The role of values in servant leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 22*(2), 76–84.

———, & Stone, A. G. (2002). A review of servant leadership attributes: Developing a practical model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 23*(3/4), 145–151.

Sendjaya, S., & Sarros, J. C. (2002, Fall). Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organizations. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 9*(2), 57–68.

Spears, L. C. (Ed.). (1998). *Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant-leadership.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Stone, A. G., Russell, R. F., & Patterson, K. (2004). Transformational versus servant leadership: A difference in leader focus. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 25*(3/4), 349–357.

Wubbolding, R. E. (2000). *Reality therapy for the 21ˢᵗ century.* Philadelphia: Brunner-Routledge.