Twenty-First Century Leadership for EU Institutions

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By

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and Derek Pelland

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My fellows and I
Onwards to happiness by
Giving, not taking[1]

—Herman van Rompuy

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[1] English translation by John Macdonald, Senior Expert Learning & Professional Development, European Commission, DG COMM.

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PREFACE

Sixty years ago, on 25 March 1957, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany signed the Treaty of Rome, which brought about the creation of the European Economic Community. It remains one of the most important treaties in today’s European Union (EU). Too many people have forgotten that it built on previous efforts to bring lasting peace and prosperity in Europe after the atrocities of the first and second world wars.

Our forebears devised the idea to create peace through economic cooperation just six decades ago. To achieve this plan, former arch rivals France and Germany had to unite under a common cause. The concept was based on the notion that nations intertwined economically would have no rational interest in starting another war with one another.

Indeed, the EU is a peace project by its very nature, one which has evolved over the past decades. The European project has always been an ongoing “work-in-progress” and has led to the unification of twenty-eight nations. Over time, cooperation has broadened its scope, and deepened in a variety of areas beyond the European single market with its free movement of goods, capital, services, and people. The uniqueness of this project is not so much that individual states surrendered some sovereignty to the larger EU, but rather the fact that this was done entirely voluntarily. This is truly unique in the light of Europe's turbulent history.

The twenty-first century presents enormous challenges both to Europe and the greater part of the world's population. In an ever-changing environment, we face increasingly challenging issues, including scarcity of resources, poverty, social injustice, global warming, shifting power balances, ecological devastation, economic and financial crises, and security issues.

It is becoming increasingly clear that survival of the fittest will lead human beings to the limits of our existence as a species, stretching our planet’s resources in the process. A purely profit-oriented approach without social benefits has proven to be unsustainable for planet Earth. To address these challenges of “our times,” a common European response is needed. Despite this understanding, broad support for the European project is no longer guaranteed.

Today’s political climate has changed dramatically, with its roots in the multiple crises that have plagued the current generations in the second millennium, causing many to lose their sense of security and solidarity. In 2001, the dot-com bubble collapsed, leading to unprecedented losses on the stock markets, followed by an economic dip in 2005. The global financial crisis of 2007–2008 is considered by many economists to have been the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The European debt crisis (often referred to as the Eurozone crisis or the European sovereign debt crisis) is a multiyear debt crisis that has been taking place in the EU since the end of 2009. A pension crisis is becoming increasingly manifest due to the long-term low interest rates. On top of that, record numbers of people have been seeking refuge in Europe from civil wars in North Africa and the Middle East since 2015. Despite the risk and inhospitable welcome, the masses continue to migrate to Europe, also for economic reasons. The recent wave of terrorist attacks in various European cities has fuelled fear in our populations. All these crises have left governments looking inward to protect their own national interest first.

This changing political climate leaves the EU in poor shape to address these multiple crises jointly. Moreover, populism is converting peoples’ fear into anger against ethnic minority groups and the establishment. The EU is included in this notoriety, and has not presented any immediate response. The EU Institutions are being criticised for being anonymous bureaucratic entities seeking ever more power at the expense of national sovereignty.

In 2016, the Brexit referendum took place against this nationalist background, leading to the UK government’s decision to start the withdrawal process on 29 March 2017. With the UK on course to leave the EU by April 2019, it is pioneering a course towards a fragmented Europe. As a return to nationalism and a divided Europe, as in the years before the Second World War, becomes a plausible reality, we can see the potential instability and threats to all states. The alternative path would be to embrace the European project as an awakening journey that tends to bring about the future of peace and prosperity envisioned for the people of Europe.

The coming generations will need to take a conscious decision to overcome their fears and look towards that which unites us. This will determine what kind of EU our children inherit, along with outlining the institutions needed to lead us there. I believe that in the middle of the crisis lies the opportunity. This book holds a vision of the type of leadership needed to transform the EU Institutions so that they truly serve Europe’s people. Our world today calls for leaders who are connected to themselves, know how to unleash the potential of others, build organisations that serve people's needs, and are stewards of society.

The path towards transformation is not just about learning another trick or method—it is an inward journey each of us must undertake. We search to first recognise our best self and then give ourselves to lead our lives in service of a bigger purpose. The natural feeling to serve first leads to a conscious choice of one aspiring to lead. In doing so, others will experience this inspiration at all levels, learning to lead as servants. This timeless concept is what Robert Greenleaf referred to when he coined the term "servant-leadership" in 1970.

Just like Greenleaf, I am deeply convinced that revolutionary ideas do not change institutions—only *people* can change them by taking risks to serve and lead through the sustained painstaking care that institution building requires. It takes people to transform them into "servant-institutions." I arrived at these insights after reflecting on my past experiences in setting up and managing two EU agencies and working with the European Commission for some time.

While writing an essay in an attempt to capture my own vision on leadership, I came across the work of Greenleaf and suddenly noticed that my vision had a name: servant-leadership. With the support of the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership in the Netherlands, I founded the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership in Brussels with a group of like-minded people in 2014.[2] The Brussels Center aims at inspiring people working in and with EU Institutions to awareness, understanding, and application of servant-leadership at the individual, organisational, and societal levels.

During presentations and workshops, our team observed that servant-leadership resonates within those people working in the EU Institutions. I learned that many of these civil leaders feel that servant-leadership helps them evolve from "actors of their own destiny" towards "actors of a purposeful common destiny," designed to address the complexity of a twenty-first century professional environment. Despite this thinking, they are left to wonder if there are any viable alternatives to the current management practices. Up until now, they have seen only a few positive examples of leaders or role models setting a model to follow in their daily working environments.

For this reason, this book not only gives insights into the servant-leadership philosophy, but also offers real-life interviews with twelve EU civil servants—men and women with different backgrounds, working at different levels in different parts of the EU's Institutions. Their stories illustrate that servant-leadership is already manifesting inside the Institutions, albeit at a more personal level. They are doing what they feel is the right thing without necessarily having heard of the term "servant-leadership." Their stories not only point to the same vision, but also prove that servant-leadership is independent of background and function level. Their stories are actually the same story, that of the "EU civil servant-leader." The EU civil servant-leader is a hero with a dozen faces, so to speak. I sincerely hope that this hero will inspire you and our next generations to lead as servants!

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[2] www.gcsl.eu/brussels.

I would like to thank my colleagues at the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership Brussels, in particular Dr. Derek Pelland and Sebastian Prieto Tovar for their contributions and fellowship. Also on their behalf, I would like to thank all those who helped make this publication possible, including our interviewees and our photographer Natalie Hill. Finally, let me thank our friends from the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership in the Netherlands and the Servant-Leadership Center for Research and Education (SERVUS) of the Free University of Amsterdam for moral support.

Dr. Ronald de Bruin
Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership Brussels
May 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Knowledge Age calls for a shift towards a new type of leadership, where the leader simultaneously acts as servant who consciously unleashes human potential. Such leaders are called "servant-leaders," a term coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970.[3] Servant-leaders have the capability to connect with others and create a culture of mutual trust where people feel empowered to take more responsibility and initiative. People like to apply their talents and want to be effective and serve others in the organisation because they feel noticed, heard, and understood. When people grow, the organisation grows with them and becomes more successful. Organisations that apply servant-leadership score better: productivity and client and employee satisfaction increase, while sick leave decreases. A culture emerges where talent likes to work and flourishes. In this way, a sustainable, serving, and stable organisation is built that is supported by its stakeholders. That is why servant-leadership offers a unique opportunity to empower EU professionals in facing the challenges of the twenty-first century and help the EU to serve its citizens better.

A servant-leader knows that the use of hierarchical power is a sign of weakness and is capable of converting power into strength. In fact, leadership does not come with a position. Servants can choose to act as leading-servants. Therefore, this book is not exclusively aimed at people who hold positions with formal authority but is intended for anyone, irrespective of their position in their organisation, who aspires to taking more responsibility and initiative in serving others.

This book builds on the work of Robert K. Greenleaf and prominent authors on servant-leadership who followed in his footsteps, mainly Stephen R. Covey and Joseph Jaworski. It first analyses why servant-leadership corresponds to the kind of leadership we need in today's Knowledge Age. A reality check reveals that the currently dominating management approaches are no longer working, while the required new type of leadership is not yet (fully) in place. It then describes in three steps how to achieve a sustained paradigm shift towards servant-leadership—from the inside-out. First, the inner journey of becoming a servant-leader is described; second, it provides insight in how to inspire others to serve; finally, how to build and nurture servant-leadership communities in our societies is explained. Each step includes a theoretical part followed by more practical guidance.

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[3] Robert K. Greenleaf, "The Servant as Leader," first distributed as a pamphlet in 1970, Robert K. Greenleaf Center; revised edition 1991.

This book also offers real-life interviews with twelve EU civil servants. Their stories illustrate that servant-leadership is manifesting inside the EU Institutions already, independent of background and function level, each of them with their own personal style. It takes people like this, who are taking risks to serve and lead, to transform the EU's Institutions into "servant-institutions." This will allow the EU to reach its full potential in truly serving the needs of Europe's people.

CHAPTER ONE

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY LEADERSHIP ANALYSED

This chapter analyses why servant-leadership corresponds to the kind of leadership we need in today's Knowledge Age. A reality check reveals that the currently dominating management approaches are no longer working, while the required new type of leadership is not yet (fully) in place.

1. The Knowledge Age is a Reality. Are we Prepared?

> The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be.
>
> —Paul Valéry

Just as the Industrial Revolution marked the onset of the Industrial Age, the Digital Revolution pushed the world into the Knowledge Age, wherein rapid global communications and networking shape the way we live. Since the internet reached a critical mass in the 1990s, we have witnessed two decades of rapid development fundamentally impacting the politics, economics, and culture of modern society. Savage projected that in the Knowledge Age two percent of the working population will work on the land, ten percent will work in industry, and the rest will be "knowledge workers."[1]

Who are these so-called "knowledge workers"? The term knowledge worker was introduced by Drucker in 1959 as one who works primarily with information or who develops and uses knowledge in the workplace.[2] Cooper put it as follows: "knowledge workers are employees who have a deep background in education and experience and are considered people who *think for a living*."[3] Typical examples include, but are not limited to: software developer, scientist, medical doctor, architect, public policy adviser, financial manager, and business consultant. As organisations increase their dependence on information technology and engage in a networked economy, the number of fields in which knowledge workers must operate has expanded dramatically. For example, today's advanced manufacturing industry depends on highly trained people on the work floor who, through both their knowledge and (manual) skills, can operate high-tech equipment and deliver their products and services as part of a networked supply chain.

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[1] Charles Savage, *Fifth Generation Management, Second Edition: Dynamic Teaming, Virtual Enterprising and Knowledge Networking* (Newton: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996).

[2] Peter F. Drucker, *Landmarks of Tomorrow: A Report on the New Post-Modern World* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959).

What makes knowledge workers tick? Davenport observes that, "In the industrial economy, one could do a job with one's body even when the brain and heart weren't committed to the job. But this isn't the case for knowledge work. It's unlikely that you'll get great performance out of a knowledge worker if he or she isn't mentally and emotionally committed to the job."[4] According to Drucker, the knowledge worker's productivity is determined by six factors[5]:

(1) The knowledge worker always asks: "What is the task?"
(2) They have to have autonomy
(3) The knowledge worker wants continuing innovation to be part of the work and responsibilities
(4) The knowledge worker requires continuous learning and continuous teaching
(5) The knowledge worker focuses on quantity, but the most important concern is quality
(6) Knowledge workers want to be seen and treated as an "asset" rather than a "cost"

One should bear in mind that many of the knowledge workers entering the workforce since the beginning of the twenty-first century have been from the so-called Generation X demographic. They have, in effect, been knowledge workers since birth, adept with IT tools and comfortable in the

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[3] Doug Cooper, "Knowledge Workers," *Canadian Businesses* 79 (20) (2006): 59.

[4] Thomas H. Davenport, "Thinking for a Living: How to Get Better Performances And Results from Knowledge Workers," *Harvard Business Review Press* (13 September 2005).

[5] Peter F. Drucker, *Management Challenges of the 21st Century* (New York: Harper Business, 1999).

24/7 universe. These new knowledge workers value lifelong learning over lifelong employment.[6] They often engage in peer-to-peer knowledge sharing across organisational and company boundaries, forming networks of expertise, for example through online social networking. They seek employability over employment and value career over self-reliance.[7] Where Baby Boomers are proficient in specified knowledge regarding a specific firm, Generation X knowledge workers acquire knowledge from many firms and take that knowledge with them from company to company. All this applies even more to Generation Y, the demographic cohort following Generation X. They are the digital natives who were teenagers around the millennium.

Drucker projected that:

> In a few hundred years, when the history of our time is written from a long-term perspective, it is likely that the most important event those historians will see is not technology, not the Internet, not e-commerce. It is an unprecedented change in the human condition. For the first time, literally, substantial and rapidly growing numbers of people have choices. For the first time, they will have to manage themselves. And society is totally unprepared for it.[8]

A 2013 survey confirmed that, "Knowledge workers like to have a high level of choice and control over what they do and learn; they are self-directed, self-organised and self-managed. The less control they have, the more disengaged they are with their organisation."[9] Thus, more now than ever, it is not about technology, but all about people!

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[6] Maureen S. Bogdanowicz and Elaine K. Bailey, "The Value of Knowledge and the Values of the New Knowledge Worker: Generation X in the New Economy," *Journal of European Industrial Training* 26 (2–4) (2002): 125–9.

[7] R. Elsdon and S. Iyer, "Creating Value and Enhancing Retention through Employee Development: the Sun Microsystems Experience," *Human Resource Planning* 22 (2) (1999): 39–48.

[8] Peter F. Drucker, "Managing Knowledge Means Managing Oneself," *Leader to Leader* 16 (2000): 8–10.

[9] Learning in the Workplace Survey 2013: www.c4lpt.co.uk/blog/2013/04 /25/5-characteristics.

2. What Does Today's Organisational Reality Look Like?

> We live in a Knowledge Worker Age but operate our organisations in a controlling Industrial Age model that absolutely suppresses the release of human potential.
>
> —Stephen R. Covey

Covey observes that many of today's management practices are based on the belief that people need to be controlled and managed.[10] For example, the P&L statements list people as "expense," while equipment appears on the balance sheet as "investment." People are "motivated" by a carrot-and-stick approach, i.e. reward and punishment. Budgets are allocated based on last year's projections but need to be spent because otherwise budgets will be cut in the next year. To increase efficiency and quality, more and more business processes are codified in strict rules and procedures. However, this makes organisations increasingly bureaucratic, less creative, and thus less responsive to changing needs. Generation Y workers, after leaving university, are shocked when entering organisations that do not allow them to express, share, and collaborate through the blogs, social networking, and collaborative tools they grew up with.

According to Covey, "the problem is, managers today are still applying the old Industrial Age control model to knowledge workers. Because many positions of authority do not see the true worth and potential of their people and do not possess a complete, accurate understanding of human nature, they manage people as they do things." Today's managers may often simply misconceive the needs of their workers. At the same time, people may also witness other people being politically appointed to positions of authority, leading to "kiss-up" and "kick-down" behaviour. Or worse, a culture of fear emerges when such people abuse their positional power to mask their own weaknesses and maintain the status quo.

What happens if you treat people like replaceable work units or, simply, things and expose them to weak management? They do not feel appreciated for their capabilities and, more importantly, as human beings. Some may have joined a modern organisation that advocated human capital to be their most important success factor, only to realise that in reality the organisation does not practice what it preaches (broken promise). Consequently, people become angry, frustrated, stressed, bored, fatigued, empty, afraid, sad, depressed, or even burned out. In the end, as

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[10] Stephen R. Covey, *The 8th Habit. From Effectiveness to Greatness* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 15–16.

Covey indicates, "People stop believing that leadership can become a choice. Most people think of leadership as a position and therefore don't see themselves as leaders."

As a result, some people disengage from their organisation, first mentally, and then move on to the next, now even more aware that they must take care of themselves. Others hang on because they do not have any job alternative or consider the price of leaving to be too high (the golden cage). Most people then slip into a downward spiral of co-dependency. They may choose to sabotage, obstruct, or, at best, comply with minimum effort, waiting to be told what to do. This only confirms the Industrial Age-minded manager in their belief that people must be told what to do and be controlled in their work, which again demotivates the worker. Over time, both parties confirm themselves in their roles, believing that the other must change to make things better. As such, they have mutually disempowered themselves. Eventually, this behaviour spreads and the organisation finds itself trapped in a co-dependency culture.

3. What Kind of Leadership do We Need in the Knowledge Age?

> 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. Those who choose to follow this principle will not casually accept the authority of existing institutions. Rather, they will freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted servants. To the extent that this principle prevails in the future, the only truly viable institutions will be those that are predominantly servant led.
>
> —Robert K. Greenleaf

We need to shift from an Industrial Age management mindset towards a Knowledge Age leadership mindset. But what kind of leadership do we need? In 1977, Robert K. Greenleaf introduced a new paradigm called "servant-leadership" into the boardrooms and corporate offices of America.[11] Greenleaf was among the first to analyse the qualities of leaders and followers and the necessity for leaders to be attentive to the needs of others. Such a leader constantly inquires whether other people's needs are being served. This makes those who are being served become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely to become servants. The true leader is also a seeker, alert to new possibilities, open, listening, and ready for whatever develops. True leadership, then, is an inner quality as much as an exercise of authority. Scholars generally agree on ten characteristics that are central to the development of a servant-leader:

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[11] Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership. A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 25th anniversary edition (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2002).

(1) Listening: A servant-leader puts the emphasis on listening effectively to others
(2) Empathy: A servant-leader needs to understand others' feelings and perspectives
(3) Healing: A servant-leader helps foster each person's emotional and spiritual health and wholeness
(4) Awareness: A servant-leader understands one's own values and feelings, strengths and weaknesses
(5) Persuasion: A servant-leader influences others through their persuasiveness
(6) Conceptualisation: A servant-leader needs to integrate present realities and future possibilities
(7) Foresight: A servant-leader needs to have a well-developed sense of intuition about how the past, present, and future are connected
(8) Stewardship: A servant-leader is a steward who holds an organisation's resources in trust for greater goods
(9) Commitment to the growth of people: A servant-leader is responsible for serving the need of others
(10) Building community: A servant-leader has to help create a sense of community among people

These characteristics are by no means exhaustive.[12] They should not be interpreted as a certain manner to behave and they do not represent the best method to achieving aims. Rather, every person should reflect if these characteristics can be useful for their personal development.[13] Indeed, Greenleaf's acid test of servant-leadership is: "How do you tell a servant-leader is at work? Do the people around the person grow?" Thus, we need leaders who consciously unleash human potential, rather than put people in straightjackets. This requires, first and foremost, a profound understanding of human nature.

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[12] www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl_proceedings/2005/spears_practice.pdf, Regent University.

[13] Leonhard J. Schnorrenberg, "Servant Leadership—Die Führungskultur für das 21. Jahrhundert," in *Servant Leadership—Prinzipien dienender Unternehmensführung*, edited by Hans H. Hinterhuber (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2007), 17–40.

Following both Western and Eastern philosophy and religion, Covey provides us with a useful model, called the "whole person paradigm."[14] This model conceives human beings as being four dimensional (body, mind, heart, and spirit). It corresponds to the four basic human needs and motivations to live (survival—physical/economic), love (relationships—social/emotional need), learn (growth and development—mental need), and leave a legacy (meaning and contribution—spiritual need). In line with these four dimensions, human potential can be expressed in four intelligences or capabilities:

- Physical intelligence (PQ): the ability to move well and listen to and acknowledge deep-seated physical signals[15]
- Mental intelligence (IQ): a very general capability that, among other things, involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience[16]
- Emotional intelligence (EQ): a range of five skills enabling you to identify, understand, express, manage, and use your emotions and those of others[17]
- Spiritual intelligence (SQ): the drive for meaning and connection with the infinite[18]

What makes a servant-leader great? According to Covey, all great achievers, through persistent efforts and inner struggle, have greatly expanded their four native human intelligences.[19] The highest manifestations of these four intelligences are: for the mental, vision; for the physical, discipline; for the emotional, passion; and for the spiritual, conscience. Vision is seeing with the mind's eye what is possible in people, projects, causes, and enterprises. Vision results when our mind joins need with possibility. Discipline is paying the price to bring that vision into reality. Discipline arises when vision joins with commitment. Passion is the fire, desire, strength of conviction, and drive that sustains the discipline to achieve the vision. Conscience is the inward moral sense of what is right and what is wrong, the drive towards meaning and contribution. It is the guiding force for vision, discipline, and passion. It stands in stark contrast to the life dominated by the ego.

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[14] Stephen R. Covey, *The 8th Habit. From Effectiveness to Greatness* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 20–22.

[15] Definition retrieved from http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_Physical_Intelligence.

[16] Linda S. Gottfredson, "Mainstream Science on Intelligence (editorial)," *Intelligence* 24 (1997): 13–23.

[17] For more detailed information on EQ, please consult Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKeey, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 1998) and Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence Part II* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1999).

[18] Covey, *The 8th Habit*, 53.

How do we know we are making the right choices and can tell right from wrong, preferably in a consistent way over time? Covey's answer is that, for this, we need to live by universal, timeless, and self-evident principles, such as fairness, kindness, respect, honesty, integrity, service, and contribution.[20] Moral authority is obtained by humble persons who use their freedom and power to choose in a principle-centred way. Values are social norms which, contrary to principles, are personal, subjective, and arguable. Everybody has values, even criminals. Covey underlines that, "consequences are governed by principles and behaviour is governed by values." Hence, values need to be principle-based. "Moral authority requires the sacrifice of short-term selfish interests and the exercise of courage in subordinating social values to principles. And our conscience is the repository of those principles." This implies that spiritual intelligence is the central and most fundamental of all intelligences because it guides the other three. It also helps us discern true principles that are part of our conscience.

Jaworski took the concept of servant-leadership one step further by putting even greater emphasis on spiritual intelligence as a guiding force. He states that:

> At the time of writing the first edition [1996], the most admired institutions were led by what Robert Greenleaf described as "*servant-leaders*." Scott Peck has referred to these as "*Stage III*" leaders. But I believe that a more advanced generation of institutions must be led by what I call "*Stage IV*" leaders. Stage IV leaders embody the characteristics and values of servant-leaders but have matured to a more comprehensive and subtle level of

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[19] Ibid., 65–-66.

[20] Ibid., 46–49.

> development. They exhibit a capacity for extraordinary functioning and performance. At the heart of this kind of performance is the capacity for accessing tacit knowing that can be used for breakthrough thinking, strategy formation and innovation, including envisioning and creating the kind of institution or society we desire. Stage IV leaders believe that there is an underlying intelligence with the universe that is capable of guiding us and preparing us for the futures we must create. They combine their cognitive understanding of the world around them with a strong personal sense of possibility—the possibility of actualising hidden potentials lying dormant in the universe, a view that carries with it the power to change the world as we know it.[21]

He refers to this underlying intelligence within the universe as "synchronicity," a term that was first coined by psychologist Jung in 1960 as "a meaningful coincidence of two or more events, where something other than the probability of chance is involved."[22] Jung was triggered by a session with a patient who told him she had dreamt about a scarabee. Just at that moment, a scarabee flew through the open window into the room. Although these two events do not show any causal relationship, their coinciding occurrence was meaningful. Jaworski was also very much inspired by his conversations with physicist Bohm, who shared with him the underlying principles of synchronicity by taking the perspective of quantum physics.[23]

Jaworski concludes that:

> we should be open to fundamental shifts of mind. It's about a shift from seeing the world made up of things to seeing a world that's open and primarily made up of relationships. Once we understand a deeper reality exists, we begin to understand that we live in a world of possibilities. When this fundamental shift of mind occurs, our sense of identity shifts, too, and we begin to accept each other as legitimate human beings. When we start to accept this fundamental shift of mind, we begin to see ourselves as part of the unfolding. We also see that it's actually impossible for us not to have meaning. Operating in this different state of mind and being, we come to a very different sense of what it means to be committed. Our being is inherently in a state of commitment as part of the unfolding process. One

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[21] Joseph Jaworski, *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2011), ix.

[22] Carl Gustav Jung and W. Pauli, "Synchronizität als ein Prinzip akausaler Zusammenhänge," *Naturerklärung und Psyche* (Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1952).

[23] David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980).

> surrenders into commitment: I actualise my commitment by listening, out of which my "doing" arises. When this new type of commitment starts to operate, there is a flow around us. Things just seem to happen. When we are in a state of commitment and surrender, we begin to experience what is sometimes called synchronicity.

How can we create a flow and experience synchronicity in practice? Spiritual leader Chopra holds the view that synchronicity can be harnessed to create one's future, or what he calls, "synchrodestiny."[24] In practical terms, the first step is to focus your intentions. You connect with your spirit through meditation and with full attention think about what you deeply desire as concretely as possible. These thoughts are mental energies emitted at a certain frequency. The next step is to not try to control but to let go and trust the universe to do its work. The universe will synchronise itself with your thought frequency, and out of its infinite field of pure potential a web of meaningful coincidences begins to be weaved, thereby unfolding the best possible outcome for you. Thus, it is not about making things happen, but letting things unfold. The universe can tune in better if such thoughts are emitted consistently over a significant period of time. Daily meditations will support this. When authentically open, you start noticing these coincidences while they are happening and begin to gain greater and greater access to the messages being sent to you about the path and direction of your life. At the next stage, you become fully aware of the interrelatedness of all things, how each affects the next, and how they all are "in synch" with one another. By applying attention and intention to these coincidences and acting upon them, you can create specific outcomes in your life.

Chopra clarifies the working of synchronicity by stating that one's spirit has a personal part and a universal part. The personal spirit governs the conscience and provides a template for the kind of person each one of us will turn out to be. The actions we take can affect our personal spirit. Note that Covey emphasises this part of the spirit (see above). The universal part is not touched by our actions, but is connected to a spirit that is pure and unchanging. Advanced servant-leaders are aware that they can always tap into the part that is universal, the infinite field of pure potential, and change the course of their destiny. Thus, synchrodestiny is about taking advantage of this connection between the personal spirit and universal spirit to shape your life. This vision is embedded in Chopra's view of the spirit as a guiding force for servant-leadership.[25]

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[24] Deepak Chopra, *Synchrodestiny* (London: Rider, 2005), 79.

In conclusion, the Knowledge Age calls for a shift towards an advanced type of servant-leadership rooted in Greenleaf's notion of the servant-leader. Such leaders must have expanded physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual intelligence while being guided by their spiritual intelligence rather than their ego. Conscience is the highest manifestation of the personal part of their spirit. By consciously connecting to the universal part of their spirit they tap into the infinite field of pure potential, which allows them to shape their destiny.

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[25] Deepak Chopra, *The Soul of Leadership: Unlocking Your Potential for Greatness* (London: Rider, 2011), 15.

CHAPTER TWO

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AS A GUIDE FOR TRANSFORMATION

This chapter describes in three steps how to achieve a sustained paradigm shift towards servant-leadership, from the inside-out. First, the inner journey of becoming a servant-leader is described. Second, it provides insight in how to inspire others to serve. Finally, how to build and nurture servant-leadership communities in our societies is explained. Each step includes a theoretical part followed by more practical guidance.

1. Step 1: Walk the Inner Path to Wholeness

> I am the master of my fate:
> I am the captain of my soul.
>
> —William Ernest Henley, "Invictus"

Can everybody become a servant-leader? Leadership is about taking initiative and responsibility, independent of one's position in the organisation. Therefore, leadership is a choice and everybody can become a leader. The key question in becoming a servant-leader is whether one puts the ego or the spirit in the driving seat. Greenleaf noted that, "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead …"[1] On a deeper level, becoming a servant-leader is an inner journey in search of wholeness.

How do we walk that inner path? Walking the inner path to wholeness is a synergistic process, requiring one to respect, develop, integrate, and balance the four dimensions to realise one's full potential and lasting fulfilment. This search is not linear and might sometimes be triggered by a series of events and/or even a deep crisis, a kind of (almost) “lost-it-all” moment in a life driven by one’s ego.

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[1] Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership. A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 25th anniversary edition (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2002), 27.

The ego is a conditioned mental self-image from which we derive our identity through its attachments or possessions. The ego feels insecure because it constantly needs validation for its survival and follows mental patterns to satisfy its selfish needs. One’s ego can be so big that it even has three faces (me, myself, and I). As the ego typically satisfies its needs by external factors, it works from the outside-in. A life driven by external factors leads to imbalance, fragmentation, and, hence, mediocrity.

The journey starts by first realising that you are not your ego and remembering who you really are—your true self, your spirit. Your spirit is whole by its very nature. Once the true self is rediscovered and starts to transcend to the other three dimensions (body, mind and heart) again, wholeness has returned to your life. It feels like rebirth, like a caterpillar that has transformed itself into a butterfly. Thus, servant-leadership comes from the inside-out!

There is no one right way to do it, for everybody is unique. This makes the inner journey personal. Nelson Mandela is known for having walked the inner journey during his twenty-seven-year imprisonment, taking comfort in Henley’s poem (see above). He did not come out of prison a bitter man, but instead asked himself the simple question: “How can I serve my country?” Defining a “Personal Life Statement” helps to express one’s unique voice.[2] Such a statement includes a person’s mission, vision, values, and dreams. The mission defines your overall purpose and answers the question, “What can I contribute to the world and why?” The answer to the “why” should reveal whether one follows the ego or spirit. The mission provides the framework or context within which you choose to live your life. It should serve a mid-term perspective, and thus be valid for several years.

The vision defines what you would like to achieve in a particular role (e.g. spouse, parent, friend, professional, member of a sports club, etc.). It answers the question “How can I contribute?” For example, “As event manager of my golf club, I will make our annual tournament in September a success.” The vision should serve a short-term perspective and could be validated and updated, for example on an annual basis. Ideally, SMART[3] goals are defined for each role, complemented by sufficiently detailed planning and regular progress checks. Your efforts should be sustainable. Therefore, it is advisable to commit to goals for a limited number of roles only. Quality over quantity! Also, one should check whether all four intelligences are drawn upon in one of the selected roles. Otherwise, you run the risk of not consciously working on improving a particular intelligence. Going one step further, you could consider roles that require more than one type of intelligence. For example, a basketball player not only needs to know how to move (PQ), but must also understand game tactics (IQ) and teamwork (EQ).

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[2] The Personal Life Statement is a tool developed by Dr. Ronald de Bruin.

[3] SMART is the acronym for Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, and Time-bound.

Values provide guidance in making decisions and need to be principle-based. They answer the question "How do I decide?" Make important decisions based on the direction of the conscience as the highest manifestation of one's personal spirit, subordinating IQ, EQ, and PQ. All four intelligences, and life, will then fall into harmony. Finally, dreams are mid to long-term objectives that, for the time being, are put on the reserve list in order not to be forgotten. Dreams answer the question, "What have I always wanted to do but have not made time for so far?" For example, "I have always wanted to give development aid to African children." When the time is ripe, a dream can be operationalised as part of an annual vision: "As a development aid worker, this summer I will participate in a United Nations project to teach computer skills to children in Sudan."

Defining your Personal Life Statement is the starting point for creating a synchronistic flow. It focuses your intentions. Disciplined meditation on your goals will provoke the universe to unfold the best possible outcome for you out of its infinite field of pure potential. Be authentically open to any coincidences that have meaning to you and you will start to experience how it feels to live a life from the inside-out.

2. Step 2: Inspire Others to Serve

> If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.
>
> —John Quincy Adams

Servant-leaders are persons who have not only found their own voice but also inspire others to find theirs as part of a transformative inner journey at the organisational level. According to Covey, this journey is a sequential inside-out process that involves four leadership roles that are positive manifestations of the body, mind, heart, and spirit[4]:

(1) Modelling (conscience)—set a good example
(2) Pathfinding (vision)—jointly determine the course
(3) Aligning (discipline)—set up and manage systems to stay on course
(4) Empowering (passion)—focus talent on results, not methods, then get out of people’s way and give help as requested

Modelling is the start of the organisation’s inner journey and is focused on creating an organisational spirit, i.e. its culture. A culture of trustworthiness and trust is the highest manifestation of an organisation’s spirit. Trust is the glue in relationships, and thus also of organisations. Leaders serving as role models are worth other peoples’ trust based on their character and competence. Character builds on integrity, maturity, and an abundance mentality. Integrity comes from integrating principles in one’s behaviour, contrary to a quick-fix approach. Maturity is the capability to take tough decisions in a compassionate way. The abundance mentality means not seeing life as a winner-takes-all game based on comparison, competition, and contending, but rather as an unlimited potentiality for people’s growth and success. Competence relates to technical and conceptual knowledge, as well as the awareness that all of life is interdependent in terms of teams, organisations, customers, suppliers, and stakeholders. For advanced servant-leaders, the abundance mentality and sense of interdependence are part of a higher level of awareness that allows them to actualise hidden potentials lying dormant in the universe.

When a servant-leader trusts their people and those people live up to that trust and reciprocate, a bond will be created. A culture of trust will emerge. Hence, modelling inspires trust. Greenleaf observed, on a deeper level, that: “There is something subtle communicated between the one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.”[5] The next step of the journey is showing people how they can work and lead in a different way than the Industrial Age management style. The servant-leader will show others how a person who has found their voice will act in the three other leadership roles, i.e. pathfinding, aligning, and empowering.

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[4] Covey, *The 8th Habit*, 114.

[5] Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 50.