Integral Leadership
Self-developing leaders for self-developing companies

Introduction

This article describes how individual self development in business and organisational leaders is a cornerstone to the realisation of full potential of the organisation itself. The 'potential' of an organisation can mean many things; but, in particular, it is leaders who are on a journey of self development who can lead organisations which have ecological priorities alongside profit: companies which contribute to their local communities, and to global concerns such as reducing poverty or protecting the environment.

Section 1 gives a brief overview of the development in psychology from psychoanalysis through the humanistic and transpersonal models to the integral model. It sets out the integral model's generic process of personal development – an ever expanding sense of 'I'; and how, in this model, the inner and outer, personal and collective, highlight four distinct, inter-related aspects of our experience.

Section 2 then applies this model to leadership. A case study illustrates how a business leader can use the integral model to develop as a person and as a leader; and how growth in a leader is connected to development in the organisation.

Section 3 looks at how a company can evolve under such leadership through an expanding sense of corporate identity which parallels that of individual self development.

1 : Self Development as Expanding Sense of Identity

Psychology has gone through a number of waves of development since Freud and his associates pioneered psychoanalysis in the early 20th century.

Table 1 : Waves of Development of Psychology
1. Psychoanalysis
2. Behaviourism
3. Humanistic
4. Transpersonal
5. Integral

The fourth wave, the transpersonal, was in fact present even as the first wave of psychoanalysis was in its infancy, in the persons of Carl Jung and Roberto Assagioli. Jung and his split with Freud are well known; Assagioli, founder of Psychosynthesis, is less well known. Like Jung, he split with Freud in those early days because he believed that Freud's view of human nature and potential was too limited.

The humanistic movement came to the fore in the 1950s and 60s with the person-centred approach of Carl Rogers and the Gestalt approach developed by Fritz Perls. Then, as Eastern spiritual disciplines, particularly Buddhism, became more widely known in the west, the transpersonal model emerged as a model in its own right, with Psychosynthesis, and then the Integral model, which is most closely associated with Ken Wilber.

The transition from individual-centred to transpersonal approaches is a major leap, and one which a number of people do not agree with. The integral approach has made the case for the transpersonal much stronger, by showing how personal and transpersonal merge seamlessly one into the other. The integral approach integrates all the preceding approaches on one map. On the integral map, psychology and spirituality are no longer separate domains, but rather different bands of colour on one overarching spectrum.

In the integral approach, self development is a generic process which can be seen occurring through all the different types of therapy: development means an expanding sense of identity, a redefining of 'I', as Figure 1 illustrates.

This illustration is a version of the one Ken Wilber shows in his ground breaking book, *No Boundary* (Wilber, 2001, pp. 14). There he also shows how the different schools of psychology apply to the different phases of development; and how, at each stage, the boundaries around the existing sense of self are helped to dissolve, while creating a new boundary around a wider sense of self. Each phase thus transcends and includes the preceding stages.

Bodymind | Transpersonal Self, or Soul | Kosmos, Spirit, God, BuddhaMind
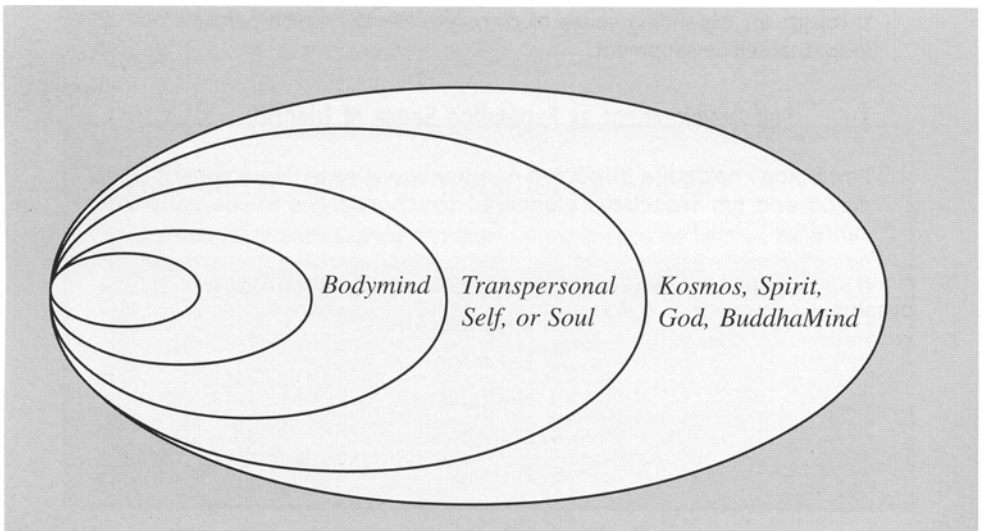
It is important to realise that the process of development is not a simple linear process, as simplified, static, diagrams such as Figure 1 might seem to suggest. It is, rather, a dynamic process of loops, leaps, progress and regressions. Changes can occur on different levels at the same time.
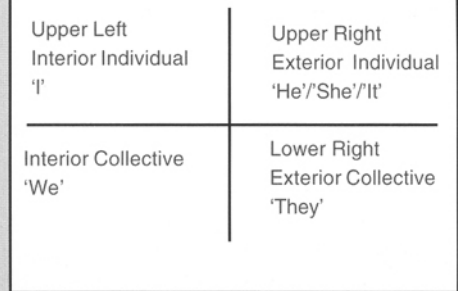
One of the features of increasing self-awareness is that we come to see that inner and outer are related. For example, with a 'Mr Nice Guy' persona, unconscious of any anger in him, 'Jim' sees, fears, and dislikes angry people who seem to keep popping up around him. He keeps finding himself in situations where he has promised too much, and someone else feels let down, and (self-fulfilling prophecy) is angry at Jim. As he becomes aware of the part of himself that is angry, he is able to say 'No' more easily. He finds himself in situations where his ability to deliver matches what he has promised. There is less conflict, both within and without; Jim feels more powerful, more in control of his own destiny.

This relationship between inner and outer is set out in the four quadrants of the integral model. The four quadrants are based on the idea that everything in the kosmos, as well as having an inside and an outside, also has both an individual and a collective aspect. In particular, we humans are both individuals, and, at the same time, part of a greater whole – the organisations and societies in which we live.

Thus, in Figure 2, the top half relates to the individual; the bottom to the collective. The left refers to interiors, the right to exteriors. This gives four quadrants:

- Upper Left (UL): individual's interior
- Upper Right (UR): individual's exterior
- Lower Left (LL): collective interior
- Lower Right (LR): collective exterior

Figure 2: The Four Quadrants

Upper Left Interior Individual 'I'	Upper Right Exterior Individual 'He'/'She'/'It'
Interior Collective 'We'	Lower Right Exterior Collective 'They'

The left hand quadrants, the interior, refer to the subjective, intangible. Thus, the Upper Left is about the your individual subjective experience: your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations. No-one can experience them but you. Your values, morals, the maps through which you interpret and bring meaning to experience also belong here.

The Lower Left quadrant refers to the subjective aspects of the collective: its culture, collective values, myth and understandings. These are an invisible yet vital component of social life.

The Upper Right refers to observable individual behaviour. It includes what I say and do, tone of voice, body language. The Lower Right quadrant includes what is observable in the collective. What the organisation or community actually does: production process, management systems, social interactions and so on.

2 : Integral leadership

The following case study of 'Peter' shows the integral model in action in a business setting. Peter is mainly expanding from the Persona to a fuller, more accurate, Ego self-sense. But this transition also means that Peter becomes alive to his feelings and his body – he is also moving towards the more holistic BodyMind self-image.

In principle, it is possible to identify stylised characteristics of a leader at each level of personal development shown in Figure 1. For simplicity, Table 2 contrasts two broad levels: a leader who is identified with a narrow Persona, and what we will call an Integral Leader – someone who is in a process of conscious self development, and has begun to integrate split-off ego constituents. This is not intended to be a watertight definition, rather to give a flavour of the contrast.

In his book, *Inner Leadership* (Smith, 2000), Simon Smith applies the Psychosynthesis model to leadership development. Psychosynthesis is a model and development process that applies to the transpersonal level, but it also applies to the ego and bodymind levels. This is how one senior manager described his experience following an Inner Leadership training programme:

'By understanding myself and how I choose to interact with my professional and personal environment I am better able to identify where I need to adjust my approach and view to better achieve the business' objectives. The Inner Leadership programme made me much more receptive to the contribution that others can make to my thinking.'

As a leader becomes more aware of her inner world, she expends less energy in dealing with inner conflict. More time and energy becomes available for creative strategic leadership. Assagioli, founder of Psychosynthesis, gave the metaphor of the conductor of an orchestra to illustrate a centre of identity which directs the orchestra – the various constituents of personality – towards harmonious co-creation. The same metaphor applies both to her self-leadership – how a leader skilfully harmonises the various constituents of her personality – and to her leadership of the organisation with its various constituent parts.

Case Study

Peter is manager of a division of 50 employees. He knows he wants to spend more time on strategic planning, yet vital day-to-day concerns seem to always keep him embroiled. A coach helps Peter to recognise that as a manager he behaves a lot like a Superhero, always fighting fires. He wants to be all things to all people. As he explores with his coach he sees, for the first time, that underneath there is a deeper layer, Superhero's alter-ego, who he names the 'Fearful'. Fearful is afraid people will judge him as not good enough; hence, a constant pressure to keep proving himself in visible ways (act Superhero). Without recognising this deep and troubling inner conflict, Peter will never achieve his more strategic role, no matter how many time management courses he goes on. The forces of the left hand quadrants – such as inner conflict and peer pressure – are strong.

Peter before coaching	
Interior Individual Need to be seen as Superhero for self-validation	Exterior Individual No time for strategy - firefighting
Interior Collective Superhero culture within team	Exterior Collective Work excessive hours (to 'prove' commitment

Fearful was a taboo for Peter: he believed he shouldn't have these 'weak' feelings. But when he gets to know this part of himself, he can see it in a different light and recognise it as a resource. Fearful enables him to be aware of the atmosphere in meetings and sensitive to the 'weakness' in others. (And is there a person alive who does not have some Achilles Heel, some area of vulnerability?). They are part of his humanity, and can help him relate to others.

Peter recognises the pressure he perceives from his team, and his superiors to perform (LL, and UL to the extent that this perception does not match reality). He can now start to take practical steps (UR). He blocks off time for strategic planning, and starts asking colleagues he trusts for feedback to see whether his perception that he has to be Superhero is accurate. He is prepared for a certain amount of flak as he changes course, because he is conscious that for Fearful this feels risky. Knowing this, the more mature side of Peter can manage his own emotions more effectively. He decides to intervene to change a culture which has indeed built up in his team, which – surprise, surprise – is created in his own self-image. He makes it clear to his team that it is perfectly acceptable, if not downright sensible, to cease being competitive about the number of hours they work.

In this, as in other areas, he leads by example (UL – his self-knowledge => UR – his new behaviour => LL – a new team culture => LR new team behaviour). He soon finds himself and his team being more productive. There is a sunnier atmosphere in an office where it had seemed that a storm was always about to break. Excess stress is reduced. As Peter finally frees up time for strategy planning he runs his team more effectively with better results and greater fulfilment. With this newly freed up time and energy, he also begins to think more widely about the role of his organisation in the local community.

This is a real life case study, with the name and certain details changed.

Table 2 : Contrasting a Persona-centred and an Integral leader

| Persona-centred Leader	Integral Leader
Blames others or situation	Takes appropriate responsibility
Unconscious of own areas of weakness, which she unconsciously defends (possibly through attack).	Conscious of own strengths
Treats people and situations the same	Differentiates within an overarching picture
Logical	Logic, intuition, feeling all accessible
Unaware of impact on others	Aware of impact on others
Focussed on narrow needs	Aware of multiple needs in self and others
Either, or	Both, and
Should	Could
Either hierarchy, or egalitarian	Holarchy[1] – both hierarchy (depth or height) and heterarchy (breadth)
Black and white, good or bad	Shades of grey, appropriateness for situation
Power over	Power to
Others should be like self	Range of capacities and development in others, as in self
Fear based	Love based

3 : Corporate Development as Expanding Sense of Corporate Identity

Peter's example shows the interdependence between corporate change and individual change in leaders. As Peter grew to acknowledge and accept the Fearful part of himself, expanding his sense of identity, so he engendered a new sense of identity within his team. Peter's Superman self was his persona; in order to maintain this narrow self-sense he had to (unconsciously) cut himself off from the more vulnerable side of his ego, and also from the painful feelings associated with it – grief and anger, which would be experienced in the body. When he includes them, which does mean

10

embracing feelings that are painful to the Persona self, his self-sense expands to include more of his ego and body-feelings. Although the grief is painful, it passes; and Peter finds himself more relaxed; he include expanding his vision of his team beyond its present limits. More of the team's time and energy is available for creative work instead of ill health and conflicts. The organisation is more
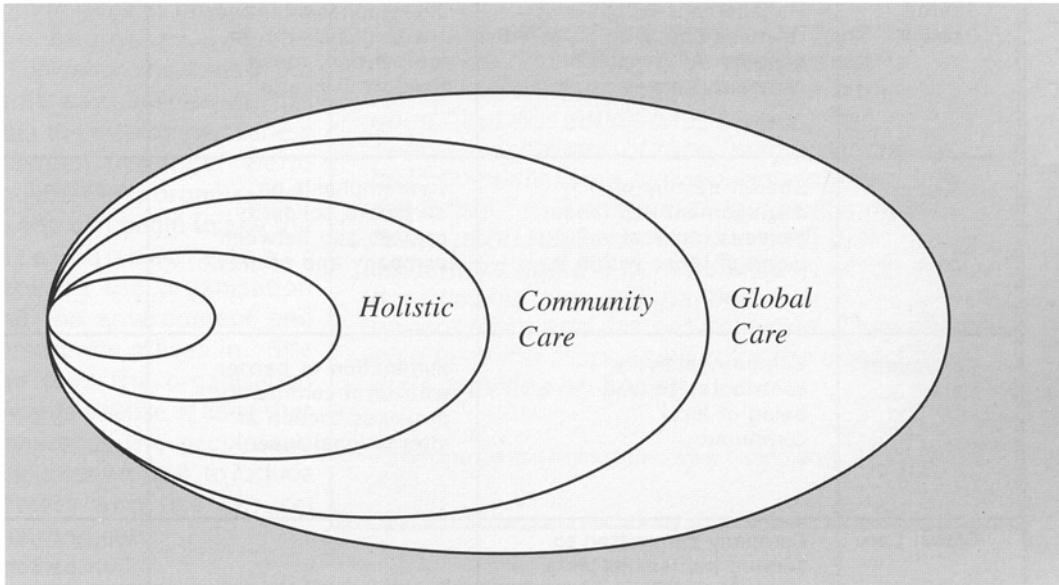
becomes aware in hindsight of a pervasive draining stress which he was experiencing as Superhero. Now, in its place is a feeling of more relaxed flow.

This change in Peter facilitates a change of self-sense in his team. They also are free to let go of the Superhero self-image. The whole culture of the team shifts, and interpersonal conflicts and stress-related illness both drop, as the team's identity also expands to include more of its corporate 'ego' and 'body'. More of Peter's time and energy are available for the strategic planning he has been wanting to do. This might well

likely now to be able to expand its field of concern beyond itself to its community and environment.

This example illustrates how we can see different levels of self-sense within an organisation. Ryuzaburo Kaku, former chairman of Canon Inc., identified four levels of expanding corporate identity (Jaworski, 1998) . These are shown in Figure 3 with one level – the Holistic Company – added to complete the correspondence with the individual levels of Section 1. Table 3 relates the sense of identity at each level, and the 'friction', the conflict, which generates pressure for transformation to the next level.

Level	Corporate Identity	Friction	Corresponding Individual Identity
Capitalistic	Identity restricted to management and owners. Employees treated as 'other'.	Conflicts between management and employees	Persona
Shared Destiny	Management-labour relations based on a shared destiny. All people in company treated as equals.	Overemphasis on ego-driven goals – profit, competition, mean physical ill health	Ego
Holistic	Shared destiny of management and labour includes physical well-being of those within it.	Overemphasis on corporate solidarity creates gap between company and society.	BodyMind
Community Care	Company actively contributes to well-being of local community.	Elimination of barrier with local community provokes friction at international level.	
Global Care	Company committed to serving humankind as a whole		Wider Transpersonal Self

Note that a 'global company' in the sense of Global Care does not necessarily have a global operation. A small company operating in only one country can have a concern for global welfare. Likewise, a multi-national corporation with global operations might be motivated by narrow self-interest.

However, the two clearly can coincide, as Canon's corporate philosophy of 'Kyosei' described in the box illustrates.

Conclusions

Self development in an individual means that she begins to see connections between things that previously seemed separate. She sees how her inner state,

manifested in her behaviour, affects how people relate to her, and the sorts of situations she tends to find herself in.

A leader who is self aware in this way can facilitate the unleashing of the full potential of herself and the organisation she leads. She responds to situations with 'awareness, aptitude and purpose' (Smith, 2000, pp. 3). Having been through an inner journey of recognising the inner conflicts that block her potential, she can see this at work in her team members, and help them to achieve their full potential. An individual realising her full potential can lead an organisation to realising its full potential.

As her sense of self and sphere of caring continue to expand, this connection of inner

12 *Self & Society   Vol 31 Number 2   June-July 2003*

and outer can also expand to include the inside and outside of the organisation. Just as she has come to view herself as an integrated multiplicity – body, feelings, mind, Persona, Ego, Bodymind and beyond, so she begins to see the organisation she leads in the same way. Just as she has seen the interconnectedness between her inner world and the wider organisation, so she can begin to see the interconnectedness between the organisation and the environment and community it lives in. She can lead the organisation towards a sense of itself that transcends the people and resources within it, to include society and the natural environment.

'Kyosei': Corporate Global Care

Whether or not it is walking its talk, Canon's Corporate philosophy is a good example of Global Care.

"The corporate philosophy of Canon is kyosei. A concise definition of this word would be "living and working together for the common good," but our definition is broader: "all people, regardless of race, religion or culture, harmoniously living and working together into the future." … True global companies must foster good relations, not only with their customers and the communities in which they operate, but also with nations, the environment and the natural world. They must also bear the responsibility for the impact of their activities on society.

– from the Canon homepage, www.canon.com, 24 March 2003
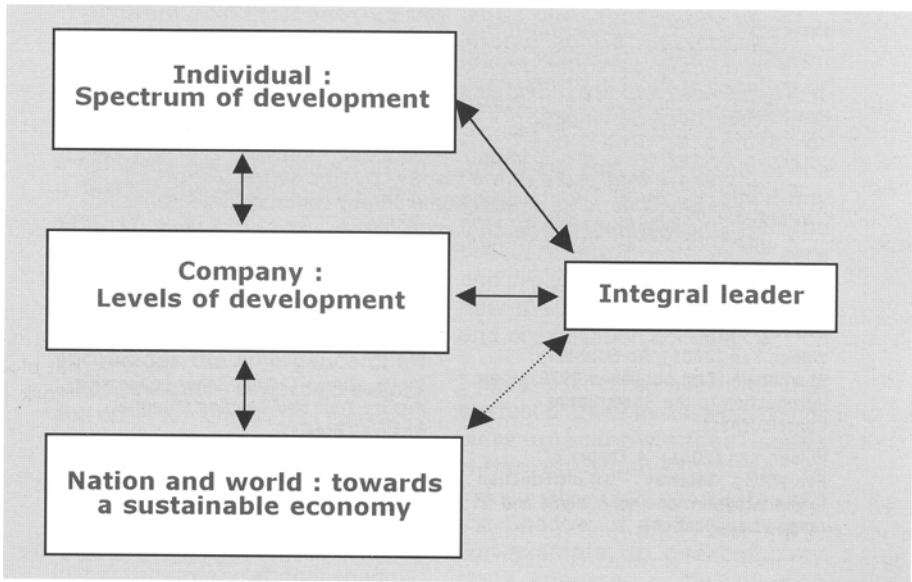
An integral model of leadership is not about 'should'. Just as an individual cannot leap from Persona to Kosmos in one step, a capatilistic organisation cannot develop global care overnight. There is clearly a need for organisations with global care. But rather than beating companies over the head with responsibilities that they may not be equipped to meet, the integral approach offers a path in which the next step is made more clear, whatever stage an organisation is at. And it sets out a win-win development. The fulfilment of an individual – in the form of an ever expanding sense of identity, facilitates and is facilitated by the fulfilment of the potential of the organisation they work for.

1 'Holarchy' is a term first coined by Arthur Koestler, and taken up by Ken Wilber. A Holon is something which is both a whole, and a part of a bigger whole (everything in the universe has this characteristic). A holarchy is a nested series of holons, each transcending and including the previous one. For example, atoms, molecules, cells, organs, body.

Steve Banks has a masters degree in economics from the London School of Economics and worked for 7 years as an economic consultant. He subsequently trained as a Psychosynthesis counsellor and has worked as a counsellor and life coach, has led men's development groups, and was involved with Wild Dance Events, creating active ritual based on indigenous traditions. His current work for Inner Leadership brings together these different threads in providing personal development training for leaders in business and the public sector which helps them connect to their deepest values.

If you are interested in the issues covered in this article, or have any comments or questions, please contact Steve Banks at steveb@inner-leadership.com.

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