CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS:

— Spirituality and Leadership —

A Newsletter for Leadership Educators

Spirituality and Leadership:
A Conversation with Parker Palmer

NCLP Director Alison Breeze spoke with Parker Palmer recently. Excerpts from their conversation follow.

NCLP: Books on spiritual issues top best seller lists; professional conferences include sessions on bringing soul into the workplace; Hillary Clinton's spiritual exploration receives headline coverage. In your opinion, why is spirituality such a "hot" topic today?

Palmer: I should make a distinction right at the start. Partly, it's a hot topic because this country gets caught up with fads of both the positive and negative sort. Some of the emphasis on spirituality in our time is faddish and shallow, and some of it may even be dangerous — especially the kinds of spiritual explorations that deny or take us away from our responsibilities to the external world.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Like anything human, spirituality requires discernment. While some of the current spiritual revival can be considered as rather shallow, there is much that is quite solid. I think the reason spirituality is arriving in such a compelling way in our time is that our long-standing emphasis on the external world has run its course, whether that is a reliance on economic systems, on political systems, or our ability to open up the next external frontier in order to solve our problems. Reliance on external arrangements has proven to be rather shaky, and so people turn more and more *inward* to find solid ground on which to stand. For me, spirituality is always about finding solid ground on which to stand in the midst of a world where the ground is constantly shifting.

NCLP: It's interesting that you use words like "solid," "ground," and "stand" when speaking about spirituality. These words convey concrete images, yet many people associate spirituality with the unseen, the unmeasurable, the intangible. What else can be said about the nature of spirituality?

Palmer: Spirituality is not so much about values and ethics, doing right or living well; it is first and foremost about reality. Spirituality is about digging through the illusions of the external world to discover the underlying truth. The great spiritual traditions all aim to name that truth, to understand what it is, how it emerges, and how we relate to it. Spirituality is about living without illusions. It is about living a

> *"Spirituality is a vital part of leadership education. Leadership educators must provide the opportunity to take the inward journey..."*

life that is grounded in reality.

Spirituality concerns consciousness of the internal world and awareness of its complex interactions with the external world. It does not deny the reality of the outer world; it denies that the outer world is an absolute reality. Spirituality affirms that what is inside of us has a profound impact on what is "out there."

All of the great spiritual traditions state that the world we live in is a co-created world. That which is inside of us and that which is outside of us interact in ways that give shape to what we call reality. The realities we live in are the joint product of the material world and the world of thought and spirit. The spiritual traditions are not in the business of denying the reality of the outer world (indeed, this is one of my litmus tests regarding true and false spirituality: The false traditions tend to deny the reality of the outer world). These great traditions call us to take responsibility for our part in co-creating the world of reality.

Thomas Merton, one of the great spiritual leaders of our times, says, "We do not need to adjust to the world. We have the capacity to *adjust* the world." I like two things about that quote. One is that it tells us that we are not the victims of external circumstance. The other is that although no one of us can revolutionize reality overnight, each of us does have the power to adjust that reality towards important goals such as justice, peace, and the common good.

Connections From The Director

Many colleagues from public institutions have expressed strong interest along with great wariness in including spirituality in their programs and classes. To illuminate spiritual components for public as well as private institutions, NCLP intended to cast the program spotlight on an example from each type of college. The LEAD-ON! program at Asbury College, described by Mark Troyer in this issue, is a terrific example of a spiritually anchored leadership program in a religiously affiliated institution. NCLP was unable to locate a public program with a spiritual component to represent the other side of that story.

The NCLP search was not exhaustive, and there may yet be such a program. In fact, the more I have reflected on Parker Palmer's comments in this issue's interview, the more I am convinced that many public leadership educators are indeed including aspects of spirit in their programs. It is the strict view of spirituality as a matter of private religious belief that clouds the lens to the presence of soul work in leadership development.

The presence of spirituality in leadership development is not about dictating which religious path students must follow. It is about assisting students to become conscious of reality, their internal worlds, and their individual abilities to impact the external world. It is about realizing that no matter how much power is accumulated, no one can completely control external chaos. It is about knowing themselves so thoroughly that their values become the solid ground on which to stand during times of chaos despite their fears, and their leadership skills become the lever by which they gradually shift the world towards community.

My work is in a public institution. I teach leadership classes, direct a leadership development program, and advise a student organization which has great responsibility to the student body. I have assigned journal-writing in previous courses, and now assign reflection papers which complement course readings and class discussions and which require the students to contemplate their own experiences and values and relate these to the topic. I have assigned papers to analyze the leadership lessons of famous people through their biographies and now assign students to write and analyze their own biographies. I stopped trying to cram all the technical "how to" training into retreat weekends and now hold those workshops on campus, while using the peace of the woods to explore *who* we are and *why* we are doing whatever it is we're doing. I struggle to assist student government members to learn to debate from an awareness of purpose rather than to argue from a sense of position. All of these activities are intended to develop students' skills in understanding themselves, and in doing so, discover their own solid ground.

Private *and* public student leadership development programs and classes share the common goal of educating students to lead themselves and others with integrity and commitment. Integrity cannot be practiced without self-understanding and commitment cannot be authentic without coming from the soul. Where these lessons are part of the agenda and the syllabus, spirituality is part of leadership development.
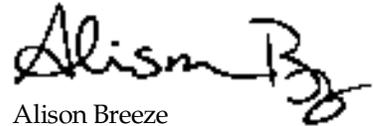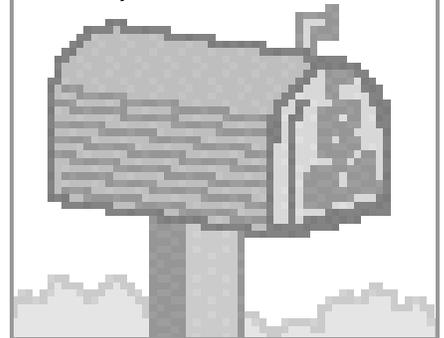
Alison Breeze

Alison Breeze
Director

Call for Manuscripts!

The Journal of Management Systems is publishing a special issue on Leadership and Spirituality. They are accepting a variety of submissions, including empirical and conceptual papers, integrative reviews, and applications-oriented manuscripts, as well as case studies and book and software reviews. Topics could include ethical/moral bases of leadership, characteristics of spiritual leaders, organizational culture and spirituality, etc. JMS is also seeking nominations, including self-nominations, for the editorial review board of this special issue. Please contact Dr. Karin Klenke, Editor-in-Chief of JMS, at (804) 320-5771/3324
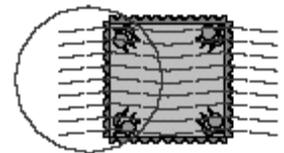
NCLP: How does the internal world impact the external world?

Palmer: We co-create reality through the projection of our internal limitations onto the world around us. To the extent that we struggle to understand and accept our internal limitations, or shadows as I refer to them, we are capable of projecting light onto the external world. When we refrain from that struggle — and our refusal to engage in that effort is always out of fear — we cast our shadow onto the external world.

A good example of this projection is found in the idea of a self-fulfilling prophecy. There may be a bank in the community that is very sound financially. If influential people in the community start the rumor that this bank is on the edge of insolvency, and people run to the bank to take their money out for fear that it won't be there another week, suddenly, that bank *is* insolvent. This illustrates the power we have to project internal fear onto the external reality in a way that makes the fear come true.

We also do this in more subtle ways. Research has demonstrated this phenomenon in the classroom. A teacher is given two classrooms and is told that class A is filled with kids with very high IQ scores and class B is filled with borderline-low IQ scores. At the end of the semester, class A has performed brilliantly all semester while class B has performed very poorly. In fact, both of these classes have normally distributed IQ scores. The information given to the teacher is false, but the teacher treats the two classes differently — according to the results that he or she already has in mind — and thus creates a self-fulfilling prophecy.

NCLP: What are your thoughts on leaders and their consciousness?

Palmer: Some people occupy positions in the external world which give them a great amount of power to create the conditions under which other people live. Because of their position and their power, we call them leaders, regardless of whether they make the external world as illuminating as heaven or shadowy as hell.

It's important to mention here that I view leaders as more than heads of state. The power to affect the conditions under which others live is not limited to high ranking political or military officials. Think about the profound impact the teacher had on the students in the previous example; or that parents have on children; or clergy members on their congregations; or CEOs on their employees.

Too many leaders use their power to prevent a confrontation with their own shadows. Much in our society reinforces this. American culture places a high value on rugged individuals who conquer all barriers around them, not on those individuals who struggle to understand, name, and learn from the limitations within themselves. The good life is seen as a matter of controlling outer arrangements, more than as a consequence of inner well-being. Yet, it is only through the anchoring stability of the inner life that one can face the chaos of external life.

NCLP: Would you speak about the relationship between spirituality and leadership?

Palmer: Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech republic, made the best link between spirituality and leadership in his speech before the U.S. Congress in 1990. Havel had been a playwright, dissident, and prisoner in Marxist Czechoslovakia. From the suffering, economic decline, and human humiliation experienced by his people under the communists, he gained this insight: "Consciousness precedes being. For this reason, the salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness, and in human responsibility. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our beings as human, and the catastrophe towards which this world is headed — be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization — will be unavoidable."

Leadership involves power, as I said earlier. Spirituality involves consciousness. Havel tells us that remarkable change has been created by oppressed people through their consciousness, awareness, thought, and spirit. These immaterial aspects of the internal world are the historical sources of freedom and power. The relationship between spirituality and leadership, then, is a conscious use of power to create conditions that uplift the human experience towards the goals of justice, peace, and common good.

NCLP: Some people assume that spirituality is strictly a religious issue and therefore should have no place in public education. You have been involved in a spiritual development program for public school teachers. Would you speak about that program?

Palmer: I have absolutely no interest in imposing any particular religious tradition into the lives of our public institutions. That's not a valid thing to do in a democratic society. But, I do have an enormous interest in tapping into an ancient or generic stream of discourse and human journeying toward which the word "spiritual" points. I have great respect for the people who say there are dangers involved in trying to intersect religious traditions with the work of public institutions. It is an historically warranted concern. However, I think there is a way of doing this deeper, more generic work with professionals that does not violate the separation of church and state. Such a way must be deeply respectful of the integrity of all religious traditions and the human soul, yet at the same time go into these deep places which I think we must go into if the work of the profession is going to grow and mature.

A concrete example of this is a program I have been doing through the Fetzer Institute, working with K-12 teachers from Michigan public schools. Twenty teachers have been involved in the pilot program, called "The Courage to Teach," which is now being replicated in four locations around the country. The teachers met for a four-day retreat each quarter, for a total of eight retreats over a two-year period. The program invites teachers to think not about curriculum reform or better teaching techniques, but to reflect on and journey into those issues in their inner lives that affect their ability to function well in the public school settings on the behalf of young people's needs.

We spent a lot of time dealing with the issue of fear. Education has far too often been grounded in fear, as if we couldn't make young people learn unless we made them fear the consequences of not learning. Teachers come to this work with a tremendous sense of responsibility and very few resources. Increasingly, society says, "You public school teachers solve all of the problems that we don't know how to solve in our other institutions, including churches, families and civic

organizations. You take these things on and make them right." So teaching itself becomes a fearful business. When you multiply the fear that is inside the teacher by the fear that is inside the children — and fear increases exponentially — you get a pathological situation in a classroom where no good teaching or learning is possible. The classroom then becomes an exercise in behavior management or social control.

We worked a lot with teachers to explore how they can become spiritually grounded so their sense of identity and integrity doesn't depend on how well regarded they are in this society, or on how popular they are with their students, or on how many resources are provided. Our program gives teachers solitary time to reflect on these things, introduces them to teaching stories and poetry, for example, from various spiritual traditions that evoke these issues, and creates among them a deeply trusting and trustworthy environment where they can speak about these things without fear of judgment, or without fear of being dismissed. Virtually all our teachers have reported very significant growth in their own abilities to find this ground on which to stand – and as they find this ground, they become better teachers.

NCLP: What are your thoughts on spirituality as a part of college student leadership education?

Palmer: Spirituality is a vital part of leadership education. A number of training programs for leaders focus on developing skills to manipulate the external world, without including the skills necessary to understand one's own internal world. Leadership education must provide the opportunity to take the inward journey, but I don't know of many leadership education programs that in fact do this.

Again, the reason for this is that our culture is so wedded to the reality and power of the external world that manipulating the external world becomes the be-all and end-all of any profession. I would point to medicine as a primary example. Once we had sophisticated surgical techniques and magic bullets in the form of antibiotics, everybody thought, "*Now* we've got the problems of illness licked!" Well, in the late twentieth century, we know that's not the case. The more inward factors of human feeling have come very much to the forefront in medicine.

The same problem exists in leadership education programs where things like organizational development and budgeting — skills that involve manipulating the external structures and institutions — have really come to dominate. I'm not attempting to dismiss the importance of those things, but I'm obviously arguing that the ground on which the leader stands as he or she exercises those skills or holds the power is an absolutely vital part of the equation.

NCLP: That makes sense — both the internal and the external must be considered in the leadership equation. To dismiss either and focus on the other would fail your litmus test for true spirituality. For many years, student leadership programs had a strong tendency to concentrate on topics such as "How to use parliamentary procedure," " How to manage budgets," and, "How to manage time." The "How to's" are critical for organizational survival, yet concern external, or managerial, aspects. What is often missing is consideration of "Why": Why projects were undertaken; why choices were made; and particularly, why power was used. Many programs now include "why" as well as "how."

Palmer: Let me add a third word to that. The *how* is important. The *why* is important. And then I think there is a third word and that is *who*. That is, *how* are you doing it, *why* are you doing it, and *who* is it that's doing it. By which I mean, "Who is this self from which this leadership activity is coming?" Of course, that is a question that can't be answered until you have reflected on the who in the first place — who you are — and come to terms with the fact that your self is made up of many parts and some of those parts are pretty toxic when they get projected into leadership activities. Other parts are much healthier and more life-giving.

I think that it's a nice way to talk about the role of spirituality in leadership, that even as you deal with the "How to do it?" and "Why do it?" questions, you have to deal with the "Who is doing it?" questions. What is the quality and character of the self from which this leadership action is flowing? Those are really the kinds of questions that I'm attempting to raise, whether for public school teachers, college student leaders, or anyone in a position to project their light or cast their shadow.

NCLP: You've described internal limitations as shadows. Are college student leaders susceptible to any particular shadows?

Palmer: I think the first shadow which I named in "Leading From Within" (1994) would have some special relevance to young people these days and that is the shadow of insecurity about one's identity and one's worth. When a leader is swallowed up by that particular shadow, he or she creates organizational circumstances in which other people feel diminished in their own identity and sense of worth. When the leader is insecure in his or her own identity and worth, the unconscious way to handle that is to try to steal it from other people. That kind of shadow must be a painful one particularly for young people because this society has increasingly marginalized its young people in the last twenty-five years and made them feel less and less secure about whether this society even wants them around or has any future for them.

I would also name a second shadow: the notion that the universe is a hostile place and that life is a battleground. In my own experiences of teaching young people in the last decade or so, it is increasingly difficult to invite them into a hopeful or idealistic view of the future. The standard response when one projects possibilities is, "It's a dog eat dog world and you need to teach me how to survive the competition." I continue to believe, based on long personal experience, that this "dog eat dog" world becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you start acting like a junkyard dog, in a survivalist mode, that's the kind of reality you're going to attract to yourself. You probably aren't going to have a very creative or fruitful career.

I think there's another way of interacting with the world that's more trusting, more open, more exploratory. People often get hurt and wounded when they trust, when they open themselves, and when they explore. But those wounds are part of what brings wisdom in life, as long as they don't create cynicism, and can create a reality that's much richer and more fruitful than the reality that surrounds folks who feel that their basic path is to get heavily armed to defend themselves. So I would think those two shadows might have some special relevance to student leaders.

Program Spotlight

Addressing the Spiritual Needs of the Student: Asbury's LEAD-ON! Program

by Mark Troyer

In a 1926 article titled "Why I Founded Asbury College," John Wesley Hughes penned these words:

"A well rounded education involves a genuine Christian experience. To educate the body to the neglect of the mind and the soul makes a man beastly. To educate the mind to the neglect of the body and soul leads to dead intellectualism. To educate the soul to the neglect of the mind and the body results in fanaticism" (Hughes, 1926, p. 23).

From the early days of its founding in 1890 as a non-denominational Christian liberal arts college, Asbury has been committed to the education of the whole person. Believing that students are not only intellectual but also moral, social, physical and spiritual beings, educators at Asbury have sought to develop programs and curricula that reflect that vision. The LEAD-ON! program for leadership development is an example of a program that seeks to integrate all aspects of the person into the development of leadership potential.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation funded the development of the LEAD-ON! program in the fall of 1991. A program that combines co-curricular approaches and academic classes, LEAD-ON! targets both students with *un*developed potential as well as those with *under*developed potential. Not unlike the view recently reported by the Eisenhower Leadership Group in a paper called "Democracy at Risk: How Schools Can Lead" (1996), Asbury views every student on campus as a potential leader. The opportunity, even duty, of each student to have an eventual positive impact on their family, school, vocation or community drives the program's accessibility to all students interested in participating.

In an interview printed in the **Journal of Leadership Studies,** Retired General Norman Schwarzkopf stated that aspects of character such as integrity, ethics and morality were some of the most important in a leader (Interview, 1994). Similarly, as students at Asbury focus on their "spirituality," issues of character and morality become central. They can then apply these principles and topics to the subject of leadership through a variety of experiences. The LEAD-ON! program provides a "curriculum" of opportunities that fall into one of three categories: theory, skill, or application. Following a balanced model approach described by Dennis Roberts in **Leadership Programs in Higher Education** (Roberts, 1981, p. 20), students who choose to fully participate are expected to fulfill requirements that teach them leadership *theory,* give them chances to develop different *skills* related to leadership, and expose them to situations where they can *apply* those skills and principles.

The Director of Student Leadership Development manages the program in which volunteers from all over campus and the local community use their expertise to give students a variety of leadership experiences. As President Theodore Roosevelt wrote: "...a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at, or ignored their religious needs, is a community on the rapid down-grade" (Hart, 1941, p. 77). Because of a similar view, some of the experiences in the LEAD-ON! program are designed to focus very specifically on issues related to a student's spirituality. For example, a leadership retreat for students in student government intentionally gets the year started by focusing on student's relationship with God and how

> *"The spiritual dimension of a student's life is seen as a necessary component of an overall model that helps them develop a balanced approach to life. "*

that affects their influence on, or treatment of, fellow officers. Workshops that present biblical approaches to leadership such as "The Leader as a Shepherd, Servant, Steward" are combined with self discovery seminars that utilize tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the Personal Profile System (D.I.S.C.). These tools allow a student to realize that they were created in unique and different ways, all of which can aid one in having a positive influence on one's environment. "Religious needs," as referred to by Roosevelt, however, are not always separated out into a separate topic or experience that addresses spirituality. The language and types of discussion facilitators use in presenting even skill-related workshops weave in the view that a student's relationship with their creator should affect even how they manage their time, organize events or mediate conflict. Discussion with the facilitator often includes building one's relationship with God and how that may affect the topic being presented.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in outdoor challenge course experiences that provide physical metaphors for leadership as they work on skills such as problem solving, teambuilding, trust and communication. Relating issues of trust and communication in working together to issues of faith is a way that can address both leadership issues and help focus on students' spiritual needs.

The importance of giving back to the local community is a strong emphasis in the LEAD-ON! program. This is seen not only as good citizenship, but part of our spiritual service

by giving to others. Not only are students expected to participate in increasing levels of volunteerism, but the staff invests significant time in citizens of the Bluegrass region as they participate in selected components of the program. As evidence of the impact of the LEAD-ON! program, student involvement in community service has doubled in the last four years. Also, the number of off-campus and community groups using Asbury's Challenge Course for team-building and leadership training has increased to over 70 groups per year ranging from large manufacturing companies to local churches.

All students who participate in any level of the program have a file on a database that allows them to print out a co-curricular transcript of their campus involvement. Whether it is dropping in for a workshop or making significant progress on the prescribed curriculum of activities, each participant is tracked through their leadership experiences. Almost half of Asbury's students are listed on the database with approximately 10 percent being significantly involved in the program. All students also have access to a resource library filled with leadership related books, videos, audio tapes and newsletters. Topics relating to the spiritual dimensions of leadership as well as the most contemporary models of leadership development are available.

Student development professionals, faculty, staff, local consultants and pastors all work together in the LEAD-ON! program to deliver a broad view of leadership that addresses the needs of the whole person. Personal examples of how the facilitator's journey in spirituality affects the topic being addressed is encouraged. With the belief that leadership is more than goal attainment, Asbury's program is structured to explore the spiritual significance of students' relationships with God and with each other. Those relationships then form the basis of how one leads, influences, or simply lives in harmony with others. Learning how to operate out of who we are (issues of character), combined with learning how to use skills and techniques commonly related to leading (issues of competence), seems to have a significant

impact on helping students develop a more others-centered approaches to leadership. In a recent on-campus study of students' views of leadership, there were significant differences in the views of upperclassmen who had been involved in leadership development than those of freshmen who had not. The freshmen most frequently described leadership in organizational terms such as "taking charge," while upperclass students most frequently used terms relating to the nurturing or developmental aspects of leadership.

It is the hope of those who direct the LEAD-ON! program that students will not only increase their leadership abilities, but that the program will also serve as a catalyst for them to impact their world in ways that have eternal significance. The spiritual dimension of a student's life is seen as a necessary component of an overall model that helps them develop a balanced approach to life. The LEAD-ON! program for leadership development is one way the Asbury College attempts to maintain the mission of developing the whole person. ◆

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Next Issue

Leadership Training Concepts & Techniques

The Spirituality of Leadership

by Bill Grace

There are many definitions of leadership, but the following, from Washington Governor Mike Lowry, helps to answer the question, why this issue? "Leadership is standing in the lonely place and inviting others to see it from your perspective." This is especially significant when we are trying to nurture transformational leadership in ourselves and others. By the term "transformational leadership," I am expanding on James McGregor Burns' ideas of seeking to raise the moral awareness of the community to a new level. Transformational leaders, from my view, seek to inspire action as well as awareness. Transformational leadership intends to change the status quo for the common good, and the status quo often responds with resistance. In addition, it is the nature of the status quo to discredit the message and the messenger of change. Therefore in some portion of the transformational leader's journey, one is likely to encounter the solitude and trials associated with the lonely place. Leadership happens in community and in the context of relationships, but the lonely places are inevitable even in a communitarian context.

Among the trials faced by leaders are: finding the balance of the right use of power and influence, avoiding falling in love with our own reflections, resisting the temptation to be right or popular, and preserving integrity. History is strewn with examples of leaders who have stumbled in the midst of these trials, and in our own lives we struggle with these issues as well.

The goal of this article is to explore some of the practices, disciplines, habits and virtues that can support us while we are on the leader's journey. With these supports we may all be strengthened when our journeys bring us to the lonely places that we are bound to encounter along the way. During these encounters that try us, we are challenged to be our best selves. Discovering and nurturing our best selves, and aligning our deepest self with our daily lives,

are the essences of the spirituality of leadership. By exploring our own spirituality, we will be more able to help students explore their spirituality in the context of leadership for a community.

I hope to offer you a framework for thinking about spirituality, and then a metaphor to tie it together. A complete list virtues necessary to explore one's spirituality could be very long; however I will focus on three that I believe are of primary significance. These three are listening, humility, and obedience.

Listening

In western culture there is an overwhelming amount of noise. That, coupled with the business of our lives makes if difficult to truly listen. The listening that we speak of is listening to our inner voice. Our conscience, or best self, is encountered when we quiet ourselves and listen with our entire being. In a recent PBS video series entitled **Legacy**, Michael Wood examines the history of Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Roman, and modern Western culture, five of the world's most prominent cultures. At their zenith, the cultures of India, China, and Egypt lasted on average 3000 years and were primarily spiritually-based, while the Roman and modern Western cultures lasted or have lasted about 250 years and were/are primarily materialistic. Wood's admonition is that the sustainability of modern Western culture can be directly correlated to the average citizens' ability to be *content in an empty room.*

Today it is difficult to find an empty room, let alone to be content while within such a room. Therefore one of the first steps in developing the discipline of listening is to create

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meditative space. The first task is to create a physical space and then to spend time within this space in order to create sacred space in our hearts and minds. The size, and location, of our hermitage is not as important as the regularity with which we dwell within it.

By dwelling in empty rooms and listening for the voice of the transcendent, our hearts and minds are transformed. By "the transcendent" I mean the source of love and wisdom beyond ourselves to which we are connected at the deepest part of ourselves. The transcendent could be any such entity; for some, the transcendent might be a god, or ancestors, or a principle of caring, or democracy. In our meditative dwelling places we can discover the courage, steadfastness and generosity of spirit that transformational leadership will demand from us. By listening, we discover the spiritual ground upon which transformational leaders stand. It is from this spiritual place that we develop the necessary perspective to critique the status quo for the common good and the will to advocate for change.

Humility

Humility, in this context, is not self deprecation but groundedness. The root of the word humility is *humus* — from the earth. The practice of humility reminds us that we are part of the created order and that life in this realm is temporal. Western culture touts the importance of ownership and power, and is yet another expression of ego and individualism. In humility we are more likely to see our place within the web of community life and the corresponding relationships and responsibilities that

come to us as a result of living within that web. Humility helps us to embrace stewardship and service as alternative values.

Stewardship means to care for the household in the owners absence. As stewards we are not as concerned about owning as we are about caring. As stewards we are challenged to care by being in a relationship with the natural world and all who inhabit it. Stewardship is an essential element of humility, because through stewardship we are challenged to reconsider the egocentric notion of ownership and power. Power, in the form of wealth and position, appears to be the height of success in western life with our culture's bias for individualism and materialism. Through humility we are invited to leave power behind and replace it with a desire for service.

Leadership however is about affecting change, so you may ask how do we accomplish social change without power? In humility we can begin to discern the difference between power and influence. Power is something that we possess and that possesses us, and power often leads to greed and injustice. Influence is more concerned with usage and service, not ownership. Influence is a tool we utilize to effect change, but as a steward I am reminded the tool is not mine. In humility we are reminded that real power comes from listening to the transcendent and making oneself available as an instrument to influence the culture, group or organization towards a larger divine purpose. The following words are from a song entitled "Somebody Loves Me Like A River," written and performed by the Montana Logging and Ballet Company: "I'm not the spring of the river and I don't want to be the endless sea, I just want to be the humble river bank and let the water flow through me." We freely engage in service and fulfill our purpose without self-indulgence and self-importance. When we are content with influence, we are more likely to lead a group away from individualism and towards the common good.

Obedience

Ouch! It hurts to write the word obedience. If service is counter-cultural, then obedience, on the surface of the word, is a modern form of blasphemy in an individualistic world.

Once again etymology and its ancient wisdom can help us understand. The root of the word obedience means to draw near in order to hear. Draw near to what; to what must we draw near in order to lead transformational lives? First, it is important to note that we are already most likely obedient to someone or something. An institution, boss, cultural norms, all are examples of what many of us already offer obedience. Second, we must ask ourselves whether these acts of obedience are conscious, and in keeping with the character of our deepest selves. As transformational leaders we are called to choose freely to what we will be obedient and for what purpose.

A Helpful Metaphor

If listening, humility, and obedience are the habits that we practice, we need to ask, "Toward what end?"A holistic understanding of spirituality includes the transcendent, our principles and our community. Each of these relationships call us to accountability (think) and responsibility (act) for the sake of integrity. Joan Chittister first offered the image of a wagon wheel with the transcendent as the hub, our principles as the spokes and the rim representing the community within which we act; community is the end toward which we are working. What follows is a closer look at each portion of this wheel.

The Hub — The Transcendent

The spirituality of leadership invites us to center our lives on that which is transcendent. The real question is not whether are you religious, agnostic or atheist, but what have you or can you give your life over to completely. God, principles, philosophy, honoring ancestors or the US Constitution — in each case we are called to align our individual will with a higher order, a sense of purpose and goodness. Thomas Jefferson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Harriet Tubman and Ghandi all were in service to something greater than themselves.

Once we have become obedient to a transcendent form of goodness, then life is the work of aligning our daily lives with the transcendent. The regard for this daily undertaking is not perfection but *integrity*. Mother Theresa says we are not called to be successful, but rather we are called to be faithful. Faithfulness and obedi-

ence to transcendent forms of goodness will bring us integrity. The reward for integrity will not always be success in human terms but it will be a deep form of happiness — beatitude — a blessing.

The Spokes — Principles

If the transcendent is the hub of our existence, like the hub of a wagon wheel, then principles are its spokes. The spokes are held in place by the hub and extend out into the world. Principles are the guideposts that align our actions with our transcendent beliefs. As we live our daily lives with integrity, we painstakingly etch and furrow our guiding values and principles into the core of our identity. Once engraved, they are ours forever; no one can take them from us. This process is nothing less than discovering and nurturing our best selves, our souls.

Our best selves demand the truth, and require the courage *to do* what seems best. What seems best will not always be (and rarely is) politically popular, expedient, easy, cost effective, or painless. Obedience to our best selves may call us to do what the world might consider foolish. Therefore a principled life is one that becomes more intrinsically motivated and less extrinsically controlled. But lest we think this work is for soloists, let us now consider the third element.

The Rim — Community

Community completes the wagon wheel analogy by serving as the rim. The rim is the place where listening, humility and obedience are played out; it is the ground of our spirituality. Community is usually not a preexisting setting waiting to be occupied, but rather a latent form of energy waiting for our co-creative acts to turn it into space. Leadership then is ultimately about the co-creation of life-giving space — gracious space — that calls us and others to be our best selves on behalf of the common good. Our willingness to be open helps us to think thoughts and feel feelings other than our own. We are still obligated to speak our truth, but see it as *our* truth — not *the* truth.

Living in a community invites us to enjoy the privileges and accept the responsibility of community membership — citizenship. In its

most basic form, to be a citizen is to be a member of the household. As members, we bring our best selves to the work, service, play and governance acquainted with the household. With community, our best selves are a combination of our unique gifts and capacities freely given for the sake of others, and a deep sense of accountability and willingness to honor the contributions and potential of others.

The Good News

We have come full circle now, because community is dependent on our willingness to obediently engage in eloquent listening. We need to listen with our whole selves, our hearts, our minds and our souls. We need to listen for the sake of others and for community. We need to listen in the context of our values and principles. We need to listen for the wisdom and courage that comes from the transcendent to us. Chittister says, "Listen for the gospel [good news] in everything you do, and don't do what isn't a gospel act, no matter who says so, no matter who orders it, no matter how sacred the institution that demands it. Or else the holocaust. Or else the inquisition. Or else Watergate and Irangate. Or else power before truth."

The spirituality of leadership is about aligning our lives with the divine sources of energy that are intending this world to become a place of justice and love. As leaders we are asked to be of service to this divine intention. As servants through listening, humility and obedience we experience the paradoxical freedom from what is and become the shapers of what might be. ⬥

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Dr. Bill Grace is the founder and Director of the Center for Ethical Leadership in Seattle, WA, and is the past Director of Leadership and Service at Seattle University.

The Leadership Bookshelf
Focus on Spirituality
by Curt Kochner

Leadership Bookshelf: E. F. Schumacher's 1973 book **Small is Beautiful** provided a prophetic quote: "The modern world takes a lot of care that the worker's body should not accidentally or otherwise be damaged. If it is damaged, the worker may claim compensation. But his soul and spirit? If his work damages him, by reducing him to a robot — that is just too bad" (p. 297). It took approximately twenty years for the current trend in literature addressing matters of the soul and spirit to emerge. Bestsellers such as Redfield's **The Celestine Prophesy** (1993), Moore's **Care of the Soul** (1992), Zukav's **The Seat of the Soul** (1990), and Canfield and Hansen's **Chicken Soup for the Soul** series, among many others, brought a focus on soul and spirit.

Between 1973 and the "soul explosion" of the 1990s, "self-help" and co-dependency issues received considerable attention, but very few writers were addressing the positive and public side of soul and spirit. M. Scott Peck with **The Road Less Traveled** (1978), **The Different Drum** (1987), and **A World Waiting to be Born** (1993), and Parker Palmer with **The Community of Strangers** (1983) and **To Know As We Are Known** (1983) kept attention on spirituality and community building issues during this time.

The leadership and management literature between 1973 and 1993 focused primarily on the areas of total quality management and change. After twenty years of attention to increasing the financial bottom-line in the midst of turbulent change, we have made a natural evolution to issues of soul and spirit in leadership and the workplace. Bolman and Deal provide a very concise explanation for this transition in their 1995 book **Leading With Soul.** "When we succumb to greed, focus only on the bottom line, and worship exclusively at the alter of rationality, we undermine our search for meaning, passion, and a sense of life's deeper, spiritual purpose" (p. 164).

Leading With Soul was written as a fable to explore matters of the soul and spirit. Bolman and Deal take a dramatic departure from the scientific "how-to" and "steps to success" style which have dominated the leadership and management literature. Their artful style provides some very helpful suggestions for how leaders can create an environment which nurtures the soul and spirit of the workplace. They take their readers on a journey where they discover that leading with soul means providing a workplace where people care for and love one another, where they feel a sense of significance for their contributions to the organization, where they are involved in the creation of quality and meaningful work, and where they can share their expertise through meaningful dialogue and participate fully in the decision making of the group. These are the ways in which leaders nurture the soul and spirit of the workplace.

Some excellent guidance regarding leadership and spirituality comes from beyond the usual shelves of leadership literature. Joan Chittister's book **Wisdom Distilled from the Daily** (1990) provides a description of the differences between purpose and meaning which very closely matches the thoughts of Bolman and Deal. "The problem is that we must learn to distinguish between purpose and meaning in life.... Purpose has something to do with being productive and setting goals and knowing what needs to be done and doing it. It is easy to have purpose. To write seven letters today, to wax that floor, to finish this legal brief, to make out those reports, to complete this degree, that's purpose. Meaning, on the other hand, depends on me asking myself who will care and who will profit and who will be touched and who will be forgotten or hurt or affected by my doing those things. Purpose determines what I will do with my life. Meaning demands to know why I'm doing it and with what global results" (p. 102).
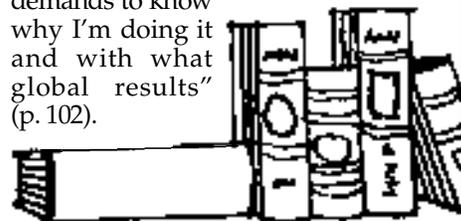
This helps clarify an important point: purpose is to bottom-line as meaning is to spirit and soul. Management By Objectives and Total Quality Management programs guide organizations in clarification of purpose and enhancement of the financial bottom-line. The recent focus on spirituality issues indicates that people are seeking more from the workplace than successful fulfillment of purpose: they are seeking ways to find passion and a sense of meaning in their work and their lives.

In addition to Bolman and Deal, a number of authors specifically address the issues meaning and soul and spirit in the workplace, including Fritjof Capra and David Steindl-Rast in **Belonging to the Universe** (1991), Jack Hawley in **Reawakening the Spirit in Work** (1993), Dick Richards in **Artful Work** (1995), and Matthew Fox in **The Reinvention of Work** (1994). Several collections of essays on this topic have been published including **New Traditions in Business: Spirit and Leadership in the 21st Century**; **Rediscovering the Soul of Business**; **Handbook for the Soul**; and **100 Ways to Keep the Soul Alive.**

Since the exploration of the role of spirituality in work settings is relatively new, we have yet to see anyone specifically write about soul and spirit issues in higher education. I recommend that practitioners wishing to work with soul and spirituality matters with students in a university setting consider reading **Leading with Soul**, **Wisdom Distilled from the Daily**, **The Different Drum**, and the essays and readings in **Handbook for the Soul** and **100 Ways to Keep the Soul Alive.** These books will familiarize the reader with many of the writers working in this area, and provide ideas for dialogue topics and questions.

An overview of the current works on spirituality in the workplace reveals a number of common themes including community, meaning, integrity, significance, wonder and peace.

Community: "Community is a place where conflict can be resolved without physical or emotional bloodshed and with wisdom as well as grace. A community is a group that fights gracefully" (Peck , 1987, p. 71).

Meaning: "Our souls are not hungry for fame, comfort, wealth or power. These rewards create almost as many problems as they solve. Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that the world will be at least a little bit different for our having passed through it" (Kushner, 1986, p. 18).

Integrity: "In the new paradigm we say the things themselves do not have intrinsic properties. All the properties flow from their relationships. This is what I mean by understanding the properties of the parts from the dynamics of the whole, because these relationships are dynamic relationships. The only way to understand the part is to understand its relationship to the whole" (Capra & Steindl-Rast, 1991, p. 84).

Significance: "The gift of significance lets people find meaning in work, faith in themselves, confidence in the value of their lives, and hope for the future. Reason and technology often divert our attention from the everyday existential pillars that support our sense of significance" (Bolman & Deal, 1995, p. 113).

Wonder: "The most beautiful and profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead" (Albert Einstein in Bolman & Deal, 1995, p. 139).

Peace: "When fear of failure haunts us, ...when fear of the other erodes our ability to trust, ...when life is always lived at high speed, ...when what we have means more to us than what we are, peace is not possible. When ambition eats at our hearts and our schedules and our goals and our sense of self, ...when consumption is more important than contemplation, ...when people are more of a bother than a revelation, peace is not possible. When idleness is more our vision of the good life than creative productivity or when profit means more to us than quality of life, peace is not possible. When these things fray our nerves and waste our days and disturb our nights, then our souls have dried and frozen" (St. Benedict in Chittister, 1990, p. 187).

The ability of an organization to address, support and implement the concepts of community, meaning, integrity, significance, wonder and peace into its culture will affect not only the soul and spirit and sense of meaning of the individuals within that institution, but it will also very likely have a positive impact on the purpose, direction and quality of performance of the total organization. "To prevail in the face of violence, homelessness, economic depression, and widespread malaise, we need a vision of leadership rooted in the enduring sense of human wisdom, courage, and compassion.... [W]e need a revolution in how we think about leadership and how we develop leaders. Most management and leadership development programs ignore or demean spirit. They desperately need an infusion of poetry, literature, music, art, theater, history, philosophy, dance, and other forms that are full of spirit" (Bolman & Deal, 1995, p. 167). This presents a significant opportunity for higher education to become involved in nurturing the soul and spirit of our communities. Our opportunities will only be limited by our creativity, passion and commitment to bringing a sense of meaning, integrity, significance, wonder and peace to the lives of our students and our institutions. ◆

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Networking for Leadership
Look Who Has Joined NCLP Since Our Last Issue...

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ACPA Commission IV Leadership Education Resource Fair

Start thinking about leadership materials you would like to share with colleagues at theACPA/ NASPA national conference in Chicago this coming March. Check the next newsletter for submission information, and look for the fair in the conference program!

Available soon:

Concepts and Connections Volumes I, II, and III in a bound set. If you have just recently joined the Clearinghouse, and would like to read what you have missed, consider this addition to your leadership bookshelf. Topics include "Women and Leadership" featuring Dr. Helen Astin, "Teaching Leadership" featuring Dr. Dennis Roberts, "Institutionalizing Leadership Programs" featuring Dr. James MacGregor Burns, and much more. Prices have not yet been set, but give us a call or e-mail if you are interested, or check the next newsletter. ⌂

Scholarship and Research Updates
Spirituality and Leadership
By Susan R. Komives

Faith Development/Spirituality has long been the nearly empty spoke of the Wellness models so well-known in student development. The work of James Fowler and Sharon Parks on faith development models energized developmental scholars to bring this gap to our attention. Their interest parallels the increase in writings on soul, spirit, transcendent purpose, and meaning found in so many popular press books. Curt Kochner's suggested readings in this issue contain a wealth of examples of such fine work. John Bolen's dissertation "Faith Development and Higher Education" from Iowa State University (1994) contains a useful "comparison of faith development with five other developmental theories." David Hoffman, Assistant to the Vice President at Truman State University (formerly Northeast Missouri State University) has presented numerous ACPA and NASPA programs on aspects of spirituality and faith development built on his dissertation work. Contact David for sources of readings at <dhoffman.@truman.edu>.

Faith development models are a congruent parallel to emergent paradigm leadership models. Indeed, Dana Walling's dissertation on "Spirituality and Leadership" (University of San Diego, 1994) observes, "The language of leadership is becoming increasingly spiritualized." Faith models often use the metaphor of an inward journey into the self before there is an informed, external awareness. Likewise, newer transforming and reflective leadership models may develop as well from consciousness of self and congruent actions (see Volume 4 #2 on the Social Change Model) as

foundations to effective, collaborative relations with others in a leadership context. In 1989, Peter Vaill's fine book **Managing as a Performing Art** encouraged readers to think of leadership as working collectively smarter, working reflectively smarter, and working spiritually smarter. Vaill made a strong case for the role of values and beliefs and matters of the spirit in today's times of permanent whitewater. The intersections of leadership and spirituality were well stated in an unpublished paper presented at the 1995 Jepson School Leadership Education Conference by NCLP Director Alison Breeze: So, if leadership is about why we seek to interact with the external world, and spirituality is about how well we know our internal world, it seems that a student leadership education program should encourage students to bridge the worlds of private and public self in order to lead holistically; to use their power to influence their external world with a consciousness of their internal beliefs; or, to walk their talk.

NCLP Editorial Board member and Associate Vice President at Miami University, Denny Roberts, shares that Kappa Omicron Nu (Home Economics Honorary) has an ongoing series of articles on new paradigms of leadership, focusing on purpose and spirituality. Denny recommends contacting the Executive Director and Editor, Dorothy I. Mitstifer, at 4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140, East Lansing, MI 48823-5031; (517) 351-8335. Denny recently contacted Judy Rogers, NCLP Editorial Board member and Associate Professor at Miami University, who is studying spirituality and leadership during her sabbatical this fall. She is collaborating with a professor in the Miami School of Business Administration, David Cowan. We should watch for the publication

> *"..spirituality measures hold some promise for use with leadership instruments."*

of their work. They recommend readings like **Sacred Hoops: Spiritual Lessons of a Hardwood Warrior**, by Phil Jackson; "Becoming a Servant Leader" in **Reflections on Leadership**; **The Parabola Journal** — with a particular article, "Listening to Silence"; and **Stories of the Spirit, Stories of the Heart: Parables of the Spiritual Path From Around the World**, edited by Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield.

Bill Grace, Director of the five-year-old Center for Ethical Leadership in Seattle, Washington, is one of the authors in this issue [see p. 7]. Funded in large part by the W. K. Kellogg foundation, this Center promotes "work and service to build 'the good city'" with a vision of "individuals and groups recommit[ing] themselves to the common good." Among their programs are a Youth Leaders of Promise and Neighborhood Leaders Program encouraging civic action. The Center publishes quarterly newsletters and has a new series of five papers on such topics as leadership and spirituality. Contact the Center at 464 12th Avenue, Suite 320, Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 328-3020; <cel@halcyon.com>.

The volume of research studying the intersection of spirituality and leadership is still small. Dana Walling's dissertation on "Spirituality and Leadership" (University of San Diego, 1994) interviewed 10 diverse individuals and found a significant relationship between "a person's spiritual journey and one's leadership experiences," particularly that "intentional spiritual development does seem to enhance the character of the reflection that is necessary to success in the leadership process." In her dissertation interviewing 14 lead-

ers, Diana Larkin ("Beyond Self to Compassionate Healer: Transcendent Leadership," Seattle University, 1995) concludes the "growing or evolving of the transformational leadership model to one of transcendent leadership involves the full balanced human — with spiritual presence openly acknowledged and legitimized as an area for study."

Clearly, the traditional empirical paradigm (hypodeductive models) does not lend itself as well to matters of such transcendent connection. Interpretive/qualitiative paradigms are likely to hold more promise. However, spirituality measures hold some promise for use with leadership instruments. I did a dissertation abstract search for the last three years and found several recent dissertations using the Paloutzian-Ellison Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS). The SWBS is a self report survey of 20 items reported as two subscales: religious well-being and existential well-being. Mary Kelly's dissertation at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (1994) revised the SWBS to deal with a ceiling effect problem. Genia's Spiritual Experience Index was used in various studies to measure religiosity or spiritual maturity. Other instruments include the Spiritual Growth Factor Survey, Sammon's Religious Life Experience Survey, the Index of Core Spiritual Experiences (INSPIRIT), and

Reed's Spiritual Perspective Scale. NCLP readers know the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator well and would be interested to learn that Mae Smith's dissertation (University of Arizona, 1992) found that all groups that contained the MBTI "F" (Feelings) dimension "had significantly higher scores on spirituality than the other groupings." Those interested in interview methods should review Fowler's "Faith Development Interview Guide" in the appendix of his classic, **Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning** (1981, Harper-Collins).

I encourage you to use measures of spirituality along with leadership when studying emergent paradigm leadership models. The connections of values, beliefs, and transcendent purpose may add a helpful dimension to understand this kind of leadership more fully. As always, let me hear from you! ⬕

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A CALL FOR CLEARINGHOUSE MATERIALS...

As NCLP grows, so does the demand for program descriptions, course syllabi, and training programs. We invite you to submit anything you think might be of interest to your colleagues, who may be struggling with the same issues you are. Such materials need not be glossy productions to be of value — written program descriptions, proposals, and training agendas are equally helpful. Regardless of the scope of your program, we would like to be able to share ideas with those who are attempting to establish or further develop their own offerings. Ideally, we would like to have information on every higher education leadership program!

Your materials will be categorized in the Clearinghouse according to program type (retreats, emerging leaders, academic courses, community service, etc.) and shared with NCLP members who request information about specific programs. Please include your name, address and phone number. **Thank you!** ⬕

Essay Contest!! Pass on to students —

*NCLP is sponsoring an essay contest for undergraduates. Our Summer '97 issue will focus on the cultural influences on leadership, and we welcome submissions of 600 words or less from current undergraduates reflecting on this topic. Essays could explore how a student's cultural perspective affects their leadership style, perspective, or philosophy, or could explore a leadership issue through a cultural frame. Creativity is encouraged! Leadership faculty may choose to narrow that topic for the purposes of a class assignment, and then encourage students to submit their essays to NCLP. The chosen essay writer will receive a book award from NCLP, and the chosen essay may be published in part or in full in **Concepts & Connections,** space permitting. Essays must be postmarked by February 13, 1997.* ⬕

Democracy at Risk: How Schools Can Lead

The Eisenhower Leadership Group, a collaboration of scholars from the University of Maryland, Harvard University, and Washington State University, has issued a report on how best to prepare students for their citizenship responsibilities. We attempted to have copies of the report sent to all NCLP members, although it seems as though some of you did not receive one. Copies are free upon request, so please contact the Center for Political Leadership and Participation at (301) 405-5751, fax (301) 405-6402, e-mail rducharm @bss1.umd.edu and ask for a copy of the Eisenhower Leadership Group Report if you did not receive one. ⬕

Spirituality and Leadership:
A Conversation with Parker Palmer
Continued from page 4

NCLP: A third shadow mentioned in "Leading From Within" — functional atheism — may not show up among students in the classroom setting, but it captures a lot of what many student organization leaders struggle with — the concept of, "I have to do it myself, nobody's here to help me, I am responsible for it all." I hear them struggling with that not only within an organization, but in terms of their future.

Palmer: That's very interesting. One of the things that concerns me about a lot of college campuses is that the faculty demonstrate their own version of functional atheism in the teaching and learning situation day in and day out: "I've got to do it all. If I don't stand up here and lecture the full hour, no one is going to come along with me in a joint exploration called teaching and learning." The result is that faculty talk a lot and students sit and take notes a lot, and the teaching and learning situation tends to be moribund or lifeless.

When students are not invited to participate in their own learning because faculty don't believe they're willing to participate, again you get a self-fulfilling prophecy. You get a habit of the heart among students which leads them to passivity regarding their own education.

NCLP: It's understandable that a person would resist dealing with shadows — examination would bring a lot of scary feelings and thoughts to the surface. Why would anyone want to? What's to be gained?

Palmer: The first shadow that I spoke of was the insecurity of identity and worth. The gift that comes from struggling through that shadow to the other side is the realization that we have an identity and a worth that is not dependent on the grades on our transcript or the title on our door. In answer to the questions, "Why would anyone want to?" and "What's to be gained?" it is the ability to live a life in which you're not constantly measuring yourself in terms of material success, but rather a life in which the sheer gift of life is enough, the sheer fact that you are alive to enjoy it is reward in itself. No matter which of these shadows we are talking about, the ultimate reason why one would want to or need to deal with them, despite the fact that they're scary, is that dealing with them makes life worth living — makes life livable.

NCLP: From our discussion, I think the answer to this next question — How could leadership educators assist college students in recognizing their shadows and taking the inward journey? — would be for leadership educators to become more grounded themselves!

Palmer: I think that's number one! You can't lead people any place you haven't been. But I will say it does not have to be a sequential thing: First the leadership educator gets everything together in their own lives and then assist college students in taking their inward journey. I think rather this can be a corporate exploration where people grow together. It would be extraordinary if mentors, college educators, and college students could take this journey together because that's the modeling we need in whatever work we're going to do. A question which provides a focus for such work between educator and student is, "Who am I when I am leading?" or to be more precise, "From what part of my self is my leadership activity coming from?"

Leadership educators must be aware that it can be problematic in academic culture to honor spirituality. The culture of higher education is biased in favor of rationality and empiricism, logic and measurement. Any emphasis on inward reflection runs counter to this. Yet, one of the world's great sources of inward reflection, of taking the inner life of the individual seriously, of asking the "who questions," is the liberal arts tradition itself. The liberal arts, or *liberating* arts, are all about freeing the self from its own shadows, from its own entrapments, from its own ignorance and prejudice, and error. I think leadership educators can find rich resources, then, in the liberal arts for their work with students. Take literature as an example. Story, metaphor, and narrative can be used to help human beings understand more deeply the workings of their own souls. Similarly art and music, history and psychology.

NCLP: College students today certainly face many fearful things in the years ahead of them. What can be learned about accepting fear without becoming defined by fear?

Palmer: The great spiritual traditions say one simple thing at their core: Be not afraid. Pay very close attention to those words — the words do not say you cannot have fears; the words say you don't have to *be* your fears.

That distinction has been very important in my own life. When I was young, I did various kinds of leadership work with a great deal of fear that I would fail or embarrass myself. In those days, I thought, someday I will no longer have fears of doing these things. Well, at age fifty-seven, I can report that day has not yet come. I believe it will no longer come. I am fond of saying, "I will have fears until the day I die and then I will probably have them big-time."

But, I have learned over the years that I do not have to be my fears in the sense that when I am performing a leadership role, I do not have to operate from that fearful place in me. For example, I can experience fear as I stand before a group to teach, but I can teach from some other place inside myself, a place of trust, a place of faith, a place of fellow-feeling with those I am working with, a place in which I know that we are all on this journey together, a place of connectedness and community.

I don't have any question that my teaching, for example, as a form of leadership, has become more fruitful over the years as I have learned more about what's going on inside of me when I'm in front of a class and wrestling with students in the typical dilemmas of classroom teaching. Teaching has become more fruitful as an external act and my inner life has become more and more fruitful in consequence as well. ◆

Reference

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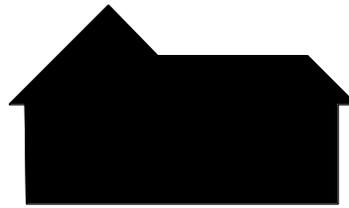
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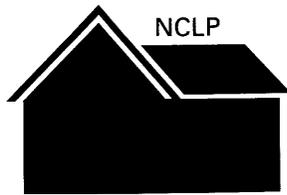Phone: (_____)_____

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