

Leadership as Process Science of Mind

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The Tao (Way) of Leadership

Man's mind should swing from inspiration to action, from contemplation to accomplishment; from prayer to performance . . . No greater mistake could be made than to think that we must separate life from what it does. -*Ernest Holmes, SOM, 477*

Process Science of Mind finds incomplete and inclusive, such statements as: "God is all there is," and "It is already done." Not that these statements are necessarily false; just incomplete from the perspective of process and the application of leadership for our lives. These statements are, in fact, components of process. Such statements, seen as ends in themselves, can lead to inertia, a lack of participation, inappropriate response, and to one becoming a dreamy mystic gazing at the face of God. Although that may be good, it certainly would not be Process Science of Mind. As Holmes says, "No greater mistake could be made than to think that we must separate life from what it does." Process SOM is concerned with the full spectrum of the unitive experience and its application to everyday living for the purpose of creating the life we desire.

Choice and Leadership

Leadership in Process begins with our willingness to make conscious choices everyday. Make lots of them and don't cop out by saying that "Spirit is making the choices for me and I will just show up." If God wanted automatons, then it seems God has made an awful mistake (sin) by making us decision-making creatures, instead. Ask yourself, "What do I want to do with this year? this time of my life? or this situation I am facing?" Holmes says, "Self-reliance is the word to dwell on. Listen to your own voice; it will speak in terms that are unmistakable. Trust in your own self more than in all else. All great men have learned to do this. Every person, within his own soul, is in direct communication with the Infinite Understanding . . . When we depend on ourselves we are depending on that inner voice that is God, speaking in and through man." Good leadership for your life or within a group means your willingness to make choices. The notion that "Spirit will lead me to the right choice" is entirely appropriate for the meditative end of your process. Making a choice is your responsibility as well as your acknowledgement that Spirit is in fact providing the guidance you prayed for. Good leadership does not use Spirit as a cop-out not to choose. Jesus, for example, chooses to drink from the cup of crucifixion and liberation (pairs of opposites), but it was clearly an individual choice, his mission, in fulfilling his vision of Divine Sonship. Process means choosing. Steve Covey says, "The inherent capacity to choose, to develop a new vision for ourselves, to rescript our lives, to begin a new habit or to let go of an old one, to forgive someone, to apologize, to make a promise and then keep it, in any area of life, is, always has been, and always will be a moment of truth for every true leader." In Process, not one of Covey's examples of choices to be made is on God, but on us-you and me, and that is where God gets Her spiritual kicks.

God is all there is, is then a component of Process for inducing right awareness for inspiration in bringing about a change, minor or major, as we choose. This is a statement of neutralization; a death to an old state form of energy and a birth to a new one. As such it is a born-again statement such as Jesus tells to Nicodemus "You must be born again . . . of water and of spirit" (John 3:3-9). Holmes observes "The symbol of water is used to express the idea of a complete immersion in spirit." This, however, is not a final resting place, not a grave, but a creating womb for those involved with a living Process Science of Mind as the recognition of the creative process that it is. It is more like dunking a doughnut of your intention in hot coffee of God's receptivity to your request.

As we don't dunk the doughnut just so we can proudly display the soggy calorie-filled fellow on the mantelpiece, but to eat it, neither does Process allow us to soak up spiritual energy just for the "hel" "er, heaven" of it, but to repattern our lives so that Spirit may act at a higher level in our creative endeavors. Soaking up spiritual energy is commensurate to making a greater transformation in consciousness that cannot but demonstrate our good at a higher level of experience. The "God is all there is" awareness is where we go in the still, calm hammock of mind to find the new energy or inspiration for action, of which Holmes speaks. The contemplation of this statement is a form of meditation-yoga, of which the great Yoga master, Patanjali, says in his first aphorism: "Yoga consists of the intentional stopping of the spontaneous mind stuff." We first need to stop the activity of an existing operating pattern in mind, and then to establish a new one. But we don't stop here in Process leadership; we swing the pendulum of Process and burst into action in the world to achieve our goals and to fulfill our intentions.

As Process, "God is all there is" is only a step or component for flexing the mind away from its rigid adherence to the seemingly fixed forms in the everyday world, where a desired limit has worn out its welcome. Secondly, no sooner do we let go of our attachments to the world as it seems to be, than our minds will spontaneously experience an opening to its boundlessness aspect-our God-Mind. When we make a choice we recapitulate the archetypal collapsing of Eden for Adam and Eve. For what the myth tells us is, when a choice is made of the quantum wave, the undifferentiated goodness of Spirit, it collapses into the particle of the specific choice we make, and the process or evolution is going on, and we are ready for another full circle again. Thus, we experience a new creativity and a new desired limitation for that is what Creation is.

It is already done, is a statement of reconciliation with an Inexhaustible Source with the same assuring, assuaging, anxiety-calming quality of Jesus' "Do not be anxious for your life, what you may eat, or what you may wear. My father already knows your needs before you ask . . ." "It is already done" is a fear-allaying statement. Our statement puts fear on hold and activates faith, because fear siphons off creative energy for negative uses while faith nurtures it for positive ones; fear holds the electrons of awareness in their present orbit or pattern and prevents the new spiritual energy from boosting up, from beaming up by Scottie in Star Trek, from making the quantum leap up to the next rung of creative power and thus we are thwarted in our quest for a new, positive change. "It is already done," are not words that are equivalent to saying, "I have nothing to do because God has already done what is necessary." Holmes said, "We don't say 'Let go and let God' as if God is going to bake the cookies." We have to bake the cookies. That is process. But we will work at a higher consciousness in our work if we know that God is doing it through us. Leadership then means that we find a spiritual practice, a technique of calming and stilling that will free up your spiritual energy, an energy that is magnified by stillness, to leap up to the next rung that will evoke your desired experience or goal.

Understanding Vision in Leadership

Vision building is thinking in the future and determining where you or your organization wants to go. Individually your vision will be different from visioning with a group. The Process way of visioning may work in this linear form of visioning, but there is a more powerful way of visioning which I will call the Field Process of visioning. The Field Process visioning is a way of thinking about your vision as a surrounding field. The epitome of Field Process Visioning is captured in Cervantes' statement, "The road is more important than the inn." Here goals or inns are minimized, and the road or the field is emphasized and, in so doing, the ubiquitous nature of the vision arises into the present moment. Instead of having a destination to pull you or your organization forward, Field Process Vision permeates and guides you and your organization.

Margaret Wheatley says "All employees . . . who bumped against the field (vision) would be influenced by it," and, similarly, anyone who comes in contact with the field of your vision experiences it. Field visioning is like the doughnut soaked in coffee. Using the doughnut-coffee example, anyone who bumps into the doughnuts of your action in the world will experience their coffee-soaked, Principle-driven, God-focused nature of it, which is your vision.

Vision and Mission

Clarity between the difference of vision and mission is essential. Vision is knowing where you want to go or what you want to become. Vision includes both tangibles, such as what products define you in the world, as well as intangible products, such as the values, virtues and culture surrounding you. Vision is a collage of you and your family, or you and your organization, and you are all standing in the present while unfolding your grand future intention. Peter Senge, in *The Fifth Discipline Field Book*, says "The test of a vision is not in the statement, but in the directional force it gives the organization." Mission is your reason for being and the work you pursue to realize your vision. Your mission guides your action to achieve what you envision for yourself and your organization. All this is Process or the Creative Process. Currently, the new United Church organizational model employs a Visioning Core Group that provides the vision for the organization. This is a more limited use of visioning for any organization. To make better use of the field, visioning, rather than being the domain of a specific group, should rather be an activity of all groups, a verb rather than a noun, if indeed a shared vision is the desired goal. This would be a more effective way of using Field Process Visioning. However, as an individual, family or organization, you should make both a vision and mission statement in writing which clearly charts your path in life, and be willing to change and modify it as you move along and your priorities shift.

Management

If leadership is doing the right thing; management is doing things right. The ancient Yiddish saying that "The right thing is the right thing to do," should permeate all our action in the world. Steven Covey says, "Efficient management without effective leadership is 'like straightening deck chairs on the Titanic.'" When Einstein says, "I want to know the thoughts of the Old One, the rest is a detail," he was demonstrating the difference between leadership and management. Management is concerned with the details of the vision, leadership with overarching goals and values. Both are important and both have their place in the creative process in which you are engaged as you bring your dreams into actuality. As you look towards the horizon of a New Year, like Moses being shown the Promised Land by God, you may need to sharpen your understanding of the tools of leadership and management, of the creative process, of knowing when to speak to the rock rather than striking it. Such discrimination of mind may eventually determine whether you get to cross over into the Promised Land of your greatest dream, or simply mouth the mantram: "God is all there is" and "It is already done" -and there is nothing left for you to do. A Process Approach to the Science of Mind, New Thought, or Spiritual Principles may make you more effective in your journey and accomplishments this year.