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Transformational Leadership and Moral Discourse in the Workplace and Civil Society

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Transformational Leadership and Moral Discourse

in the

Workplace and Civil Society

by

John W. Frank

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Educational Leadership
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Perhaps the time has come when we should endeavor to dissolve the structure of war that underlies the pluralistic society, and erect the more civilized structure of the dialogue. It would be no less sharply pluralistic, but rather, more so, since the real pluralisms would be clarified out of their present confusion. And amid the pluralism, a unity would be discernible -- the unity of an orderly conversation. The pattern would not be that of ignorant armies clashing by night but of informed men [sic] locked together in the full light of a new dialectical day. Thus we might present to a candid world the spectacle of a civil society.

-- John Courtney Murray (1960, p. 213)

Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This study was grounded in the theory and practice of transformational leadership, where leaders function as moral agents of change as they facilitate values talk (moral discourse) among their constituents. The study took its cue from Rost's call for a new paradigm for leadership ethics that calls for methods of group moral decisionmaking to assess organizational and social ends. The inquiry sought to better understand how leaders engage others in moral conversation and how such processes influence organizational culture and democratic civil society.

The methodology was qualitative and phenomenological as it was centered on leaders' perceptions of their experiences in diverse organizational settings across public, private, and social sectors. Data was collected through focus groups and individual interviews and analyzed through the constant comparative method. Data was also interpreted within the socio-political context of a communitarian worldview that postures moral discourse as a means to identify shared values that build social capital and sustain the common good. Other theoretical contexts draw from discourse ethics, adult critical pedagogy, and moral development.

The findings of the study put forth a typology of moral discourse framed in categories that include: conversational venues, individual and social impediments to the conversation, communicative dynamics that stimulate the conversation, speech actions, speech styles, functions of moral discourse, and specific leader practices that advance the conversation. Implications for practice in the workplace are framed in areas of organizational development and business ethics. Other implications are considered for the practice of democratic deliberation.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

The literature of contemporary leadership theory and practice heralds the

emergence of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Tichy & Devanna,

1990) imbued with moral context and emphasis on shared ownership of organizational

goals and values. But critics like Foster (1986, 1989) and Rost (1991, 1993, 1995) claim

that the tenets of transformational leadership as espoused by Burns have been co-opted

by an industrial paradigm preoccupied with the preservation of traditional concepts

rooted in organizational management theory. Those models continue to interpret

leadership largely as the singular actions and style of the individual as leader-person.

They view leadership effectiveness primarily in terms of organizational performance

measured by productivity, which is primarily a function of management.

These critics claim that true transformational leaders are those who go beyond

this limited view and strive to alter or elevate the values and goals of followers[1] through

vital teaching that stimulates social change (Tierney & Foster, 1989). The process deals

not only with the educational and moral development of individuals and organizations,

but the larger community as well by contributing to the advancement of democratic

society (Dew, 1997). These theorists draw substantially from Critical Theory that aims to

enhance the ability of individuals and groups to structure organizational discourse

around social relations and values that create communities of critically reflective citizens.

They call for transformative leaders concerned with issues of justice, empowerment, and

an overriding commitment to the common good, with a particular concern for the

disadvantaged and marginalized. In this vein, leadership is more than a skill, trait, or

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[1] Consistent with Rost's (1993) use of the term as it relates to transformational leadership, I use
the words followers and collaborators interchangeably. The latter is increasingly preferred
because the former tends to imply passivity. Yet, by purposefully using the word followers in the
context of transformational leadership, one can hope to give it significance and legitimacy within
the dynamics of leadership.

prescriptive protocol that makes for effective organizations. Transformational leadership

is a collaborative undertaking in ethical decision making by groups, having the capacity

to change organizational culture by engaging collaborators in moral discourse.

Transformational leaders are committed to processes of on-going organizational learning

within the context of the larger social environment. They are about the task of

empowering followers to become collaborative participants who give voice to the nature

of their realities by calling one another to shared leadership.

In taking this approach, these thinkers pose the challenge of transformational

leadership within the larger context of democracy and civil society. Tierney (1989) raises

a pivotal question: What kind of leadership needs to take place if we are to advance

democracy? Such leadership must be socially critical, must reside not in a person but in

the relationship between individuals, and must be oriented toward social vision and

societal change (Foster, 1989). Tierney suggests that the Burnsian model does this by

using a Critical Theory approach to leadership. The transformational leader becomes a

"cultural entrepreneur" who assesses with others the history of the organization in the

context of its social milieu and engages followers as collaborators in creating new ways

of thinking and acting (Tierney, 1989, p. 159). For the same reasons, from the

perspective of sociology, such leadership elicits sociological imagination (Mills, 1959).

Moral discourse among a specific learning community is central to this idea of

critical leadership operating within a sense of mutuality (Tierney, 1989). Critical Theory

assumes that through dialogue and self-reflection we are able to recreate our world.

Thus, a central premise of this study is that critical transformational leadership is not

focused on simply maintaining systems or increasing productivity. Rather, it is primarily

concerned with fermenting the moral dialogue that can stimulate organizational,

institutional, and social change. The need for moral reflection, by the self and the

community, calls for a reconstruction of leadership that involves something more than

management (Foster, 1986). Leadership is about social change and human emancipation, ultimately aiming to create a morally reflective community.

This reconstruction of leadership points to the central problem that lies at the heart of this study. How do leaders engage followers as collaborators in moral conversation? Joseph Rost (1995) addresses this theme when he calls for a new paradigm of leadership ethics, one that places group ethical decision making at center stage. Traditional approaches to leadership ethics have largely been driven by character ethics and individual moral decision making models. What is needed now, in the postmodern reality, are models that can facilitate public moral discourse in ways that build common ground and moral consensus.

A particularly promising thread is the emergence of contemporary communitarian political theory as evidenced in the writings of several sociologists, political commentators, and citizenship theorists. These thinkers have cited the need to shape a new public philosophy on which to reconstruct the idea of the common good (Barber, 1984; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985, 1991; Etzioni, 1993, 1996; Janowitz, 1983; Pratte, 1988; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Yankelovich, 1991,1999). They are concerned about the disengagement of American citizenry from community affairs, deliberation on the formation of public policy, and public life in general. They note the widespread tendencies to privatize things that have heretofore been public, to place a higher premium on private rights than public and social obligations, to be blind to the connections between private interests and public policy, and to allow special interests to supersede the public good. At the heart of their challenge is the call to balance individual freedom with social responsibility and to stake out new common ground within an increasingly diverse multicultural society. A communitarian approach to public policy seeks to engage core values that can unite diverse interest groups in ways that build community. What is needed, they argue, is a strategy for remoralizing American society

so that there is a commitment to values that can become the common ground on which to reconstruct the public good.

To that end, Bellah et al. (1991, p. 12) call for moral "conversations that matter" and that build community. More than mere civic discourse, the authors challenge American society to engage in a kind of moral discourse that unpacks underlying core values around which we might revitalize our social institutions, our experience of community, and the sense of the common good. This study investigates how leaders can make that happen and help reconcile the conflict between individual self interests and the good of the community. Such a process may contribute to the emergence of what Etzioni (1996) envisions as the "new golden rule" based on a moral imperative to "respect and uphold society's moral order as you would have society respect and uphold your autonomy to live a full life (p. xviii)." In doing so, the poles of individual autonomy and social order are balanced through voluntary compliance rooted in a community's shared beliefs and a mutual commitment to the public good. I begin this study with the strong belief that the means toward that end is public moral conversation, the context is organizations, and the impetus is transformational leadership.

Purpose and Overview of the Study

An overriding premise of this research is an understanding of moral discourse as a function of transformational leadership. The purposes of this study seek to investigate how leaders practice moral discourse. This study takes the form of applied research because it is conducted in a field of particular practice, the practice of transformational leadership. Its aim is the expansion of knowledge relevant to a specific problem that centers on how leaders promote and practice moral conversation.

The methodology of this study, set forth in Chapter Three, is qualitative and involves leaders across diverse organizational sectors. Through focus groups and

interviews, this study investigated how those leaders make sense of their experience, motivations, and behaviors regarding their practice of moral talk among their constituents. The inquiry centers on the experience of leaders across various organizational sectors including public officials, employers, school administrators, clergy, media personnel, leaders of non-profit organizations, community activists, and members of the professional community. I assess how and why these leaders engage in moral discourse, or fail to do so, in the context of their respective constituencies. Those constituents include fellow citizens, employees, members, colleagues, clients, consumers, overseers, vendors, funders, and other stakeholders who interface within their organizational environments, whether that be the workplace or civil society.

Focus groups and interviews are themselves forms of conversation that provide context for moral discourse. As researcher, I facilitated "conversations that matter" (Bellah et al., 1991) among the leaders who participated in this study. In this sense, moral conversation is both the object and means of my investigation. Consequently, more than mere subjects, the participants in this study were, in a very real sense, research partners in a mutual pursuit of greater understanding about the nature of moral discourse and its relationship to leadership practice.

Assumptions

I make several assumptions that define and delimit the context of the study. First, the context is transformational leadership practice. For that reason, the leades who served as participants in this study were screened and recruited because they met certain criteria that give evidence to their proclivity to the practice of a transformational leadership style. Their approach to leadership has a moral dimension to the extent it "raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). As leaders who

demonstrate transformational leadership, they have relevant experience in forms of organizational discourse that address values and the nature of social relationships. They contribute in some way to a kind of discourse that aims to create a community of critical and reflective citizens within their organizations (Tierney & Foster, 1989). For these reasons, their experience is an appropriate source of data for this study.

Second, this research builds on pilot research I undertook regarding the formation of communitarian civic values. It seeks to understand how leaders' practice of moral discourse contributes to the renewal of civil society and the advancement of participatory democratic systems. This discussion presumes an interpretation of moral discourse within the frame of communitarian political philosophy. That perspective suggests that civic discourse is ipso facto moral discourse to the degree it functions as public deliberation that discerns shared values that constitute the public good. In that regard, this study attempts to address Etzioni's (1996) challenge to learn how shared values are nurtured within diverse and multicultural groups. It seeks to understand how shared values might become moral norms for civic commitment to social justice and the common good. Therefore, besides being selected on the basis of their transformational leadership style, participants in this study were chosen because they are also involved in civic affairs and demonstrate a concern for the well being of the larger community.

Third, though one context of this study is educational leadership, the focus of this investigation is applied ethics that shapes the practice of leadership in all organizations. To maintain viability, all organizations are challenged to become learning organizations (Senge, 1990). The context of educational leadership is germane to all of them. For this reason, I sought to involve leaders across a wide spectrum of organizational sectors, hoping to gain a richness of diversity in the database.

Fourth, my interpretation of the phenomenon of moral discourse attempts to weave an eclectic intellectual tapestry using threads from theoretical traditions in adult

education, civic education, leadership theory, organizational development, moral development, political and moral philosophy, sociology, Critical Theory, and discourse ethics. The relevance of these traditions will be forthcoming. Such an approach enriches understanding and demonstrates the interdisciplinary dynamics of educational leadership practice incumbent within all organizations and institutions. Nonetheless, I strive to remain true to the aims of applied research and the purpose of this study, which seeks to inform practice as it relates to ethical leadership.

Definition of Terms

Transformational leadership, communitarianism and moral discourse are the key concepts that shape this research. Each is discussed with substance in Chapter Two. But some attempt to define them early on is warranted.

Transformational leaders are agents of change within organizations and society. Transformation leadership is an influence relationship among those leaders and their followers, where both raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation (Burns, 1978). It is an influence relationship where all parties to the process intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (Rost, 1991). Thus, the dynamics of transformational leadership emphasize the leader-person's role as an agent of collaborative moral deliberation with others who together intend real change within organizations and society.

Communitarianism is a social political philosophy that seeks to balance individual rights with social responsibilities. It emphasizes a commitment to the common good by appealing to civic virtue and voluntary compliance, while minimizing the role of government as much as possible. In the tradition of civic republicanism, communitarianism seeks to build bonds of social capital that sustain civil society and stimulate responsible citizenship in forms of participatory democracy (Etzioni, 1996).

Moral discourse is a complex human phenomenon. It begs some rational description early on in this study. Moral discourse is interactive, deals with problems of justice, and takes place in the context of moral educational situations (Oser, 1986). Its method attempts to stimulate higher stages of moral development. We practice moral discourse when we express moral concerns in ways that attempt to influence others by posturing reasons that are open to discussion with others (Bird, 1996).

I use the terms moral discourse, values talk, moral conversation, and moral dialogue interchangeably. A fuller meaning of moral discourse will unfold in the chapters that follow. Nonetheless, I posture a working definition in the same words used to define the phenomenon for the study's participants during the introduction of the focus group sessions:

> Moral discourse is a socially interactive process that engages participants in conversation that evokes and legitimates the inclusion of values talk. That is, it interplays between facts and values by drawing upon beliefs, dispositions, and intuitions in an effort to surface shared meaning that shapes consensus regarding the right thing to do in a given situation.

Several other terms warrant some early definition. To the extent that I use the terms moral discourse and values talk interchangeably, I define values as "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). Hence, values talk as moral discourse is particularly meaningful conversation about moral ends. It addresses the substantial beliefs and dispositions that lie at the heart of an individual's motivation, worldview and sense of the good and desirable life.

The context of <u>postmodernism</u> is also relevant to this discussion. Postmodernism has a multiplicity of meanings in the literature, but what they have in common is the claim that current forms of intellectual critique are outmoded and cannot defend their reliance on universal reason (Beyer & Liston, 1992). The problem of postmodernism is relevant to the challenge of moral conversation, as the former presumes cultural relativism that would seem to inhibit the prospect for shared meaning in moral discourse. Yet, shared meaning is critical to processes of constructive values talk, as will become evident in the presentation of the data. To that end, this study speaks to that dilemma.

Finally, and related to postmodernism and flowing from it, <u>Critical Theory</u> represents a school of philosophical thought that is critical of the economics, politics, and culture of Western societies. It is focused on the pursuit of social justice and the liberation of people by giving voice to the voiceless. It seeks to eliminate social ills by empowering people "as active and deciding beings, bearing responsibility for their choices and able to explain them by referring to their own purposes, ideals, and beliefs" (Fay, 1977, p. 229).

Research Questions and Suppositional Frames

The overarching question that drives this research can be stated as follows: <u>How do transformational leaders understand their experience of moral conversation</u>? That question drives three particular objectives that steer the focus of the forthcoming analysis. Those objectives are: (1) to gain insight about the phenomenon of moral discourse itself; (2) to discover how moral discourse influences the dynamics of leadership; and (3) to learn how moral discourse functions within organizational settings, particularly in the context of the workplace and civil society.

The research question frames the study in a phenomenological context that accentuates the emic dimension of the data. That is, the study considers moral

discourse from the perspective of the participants themselves, as they come to interpret and make sense of their behaviors and motivations vis-à-vis their practice of moral conversations in the context of their everyday life experiences. As the study progressed through data analysis and a protracted and recursive review of the literature, I came to grasp a number of corollary questions. Those related questions were spawned by interfacing several intellectual suppositional frames that undergird this study. Each of those secondary questions can be considered in light of the primary research question. By way of introduction, I give brief mention here to four intellectual frames. These suppositional frames suggest a range of corollary questions that amplify the primary question. They also serve to introduce the four theoretical threads that frame the subsequent literature review.

Supposition #1 - Transformational Leadership Ethics

This study presupposes an understanding of leadership as a transformational process, where leader-persons function as moral agents of change as they facilitate and participate in values talk and moral conversation with their colleagues, followers, and other constituents. Corollary questions include the following:

- What is the moral dimension of transformational leadership?

- How do transformational leaders provide ethical leadership in the context of the workplace as well as in wider areas of civic engagement?

- How do transformational leaders promote the development of moral communities in their organizations?

Supposition #2 - Communitarian Public Philosophy and the Common Good

A report by the National Commission on Civic Renewal (1998) argues that the cause for the decline in civil society is rooted in the collapse of a meaningful understanding of social morality. Social commentators like Bellah et al. (1991) suggest that the moral and civic decline of our major political, economic, educational, religious,

and social institutions is the result of excessive individualism that has substantially contributed to the diminishment of common ground and community. Each of these factors constrain our ability to define what constitutes the common public good. Much of the problem is rooted in our inability to engage in social moral reflection and the lack of communitarian models that can facilitate that civic discourse. If transformational leadership is a means to build a better world that serves the common good, then we are challenged to find ways that better engage both the unum and the pluribus of the American democratic process. To that end, moral civic discourse has the potential to enhance social capital and contribute to the revival of civil society by empowering citizens to function with greater power and freedom within participatory democracy (Etzioni, 1996). This discussion prompts corollary questions such as the following:

- What is the role of moral discourse within a participatory democracy?

- What kinds of processes are required for promoting moral discourse in policy debate?

- How is the common public good defined in a pluralistic democracy?

Supposition #3 - Adult Education and the Formative Challenge of Citizenship

Despite the traditional focus that adult education has placed on civic responsibility, modern practice has largely forsaken that role in favor of other aims (Boggs, 1991a, 1992). The consequence is tragic as adult education fails in its primary responsibility to form citizens to function in a democracy through critical reflection that serves the common good (Davison, 1989). The ensuing individualism thwarts a commitment to the commonwealth. The paramount problem, then, is a need to keep citizen-learners responsible for the whole community and not just their own personal interests, and to do it while still preserving personal freedom and the liberal agenda of human development. This study attempts to retrieve that earlier aim of adult education and to consider it under the rubric of moral discourse. The transformational leader

becomes an agent for transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991) as citizens'

perspectives change and new ones emerge through processes of critical reflection.

Corollary questions include the following:

- How does moral discourse educate adults to become responsible citizens?
- How can moral discourse be a context for adult transformational learning?

Supposition #4 - Public Moral Dialogue and Discourse Ethics

This study addresses processes of moral discourse and how they work or do not

work, rather than their application to particular policy issues or social problems. Though

there are established theories of public moral deliberation (Bohmann, 1996; Habermas,

1984; Rawls, 1971), few are based in principles of synergistic and generative dialogue

(Bohm, 1996; Isaacs, 1999; Yankelovich, 1999). Where prescriptive methods exist, they

tend to be limited to overly rational worksite applications that function under the rubric of

either professional ethics, conflict resolution, or problem solving (Brown, 1990, 1999;

Dew, 1997). Their primary focus is outcomes rather than the actual processes of moral

conversation and values talk. The "how to" of moral discourse is the center-stage of this

inquiry. Corollary questions include the following:

- What is moral discourse?
- How can we identify moral discourse when we see it? What are its characteristics?
- Where does moral discourse take place?
- What factors promote moral discourse and what factors inhibit it?
- How do leaders "do" moral discourse?

Significance of the Research

This study brings forth helpful concepts, constructs, and categories that enhance an understanding of the practice of moral conversation and how it relates to the practice of leadership ethics. As my review of the literature demonstrates, the theory and practice of moral discourse is not very well developed. This study serves to advance that knowledge by understanding leaders' practices of moral talk within the context of the four suppositional frames. Each of the areas of transformational leadership, communitarian political theory, adult civic education, and discourse ethics draw from unique literature traditions. The knowledge gap in one area is often complemented by knowledge in another area, justifying an approach that is "shamelessly eclectic" (Rossman & Wilson, 1994). Thus, the interface among these intellectual threads gives particular context to the research problem as I present it.

This study holds promise in shedding new light on those theories as it seeks to better understand the relationship among processes of moral dialogue, adult moral development, critical thinking, and group judgments in participatory democracy. This study is important because it has potential to significantly expand our theoretical knowledge of how leaders facilitate moral discourse and how those dynamics function within organizational culture and democratic civil society.

Since the onset of the Enlightenment and its basis in rationalism, most literature on moral discourse has an individualist, pedagogical, or problem-solving bent. Its purpose is to affect personal moral decision making, particularly in the context of the moral development of children. There is a conspicuous research gap regarding the manner in which adults come to make moral judgments on practical matters within a group context (Etzioni, 1996). This gap raises the critical need to define the actual processes of moral

discourse used by adults and a need for more research that illuminates how leaders elicit consensus and shared values in a multicultural, pluralistic society.

As the literature review will demonstrate, besides being individualistic, existing theories of moral action are largely developmental and rational. Those theories tend to ignore the fluidity of moral decision-making influenced by socio-political dynamics of everyday dialogue situations based in the "lifeworld" of the workplace and civil society (Habermas, 1984). Yet, even Habermas' rational approach does not factor well the synergistic effect inherent in shared dialogue processes (Bohm, 1996). Other approaches like Rawls' (1971) are constrained by the neutrality of classic liberalism and side-step moral discourse altogether. Still others, such as Kohlberg's (1976), are grounded in Kantian moral norms and developmental stage theories. And while contemporary enthusiasts of deliberation in civil society call for renewal of participatory democracy (Bohmann, 1996; Fishkin, 1991), they say little about how such deliberation actually works. Instead, those theories tend to be based on ideal constructs and not real situations.

Much of the discussion about the ethics of leadership is hampered by problems regarding the definition of leadership, the limited scope of ethics, and the paucity of literature on leadership ethics (Rost, 1995). For the most part, the literature is oriented to administrative and managerial functions and framed in the context of character ethics, professional ethics, and individual moral problem solving (Ciulla, 1998b; Lashway, 1996). As one draws clearer distinctions between leadership and management, most professional ethics ends up being more aligned to management theory and does not bear directly on models of transformational leadership. What is needed is more research that addresses group process methods that might help leaders and their collaborators make shared moral choices.

From the vantage point of transformational leadership theory, there is a need to better understand how groups make collective moral decisions that bring about organizational change, as well as to understand how leaders influence that process. To that end, Rost calls for the development of new theories and methods that explain how groups, not individuals, make moral judgments. Echoing Dewey's (1988c) "ends in view," those choices must address the consequences to the public good and test them through the rigor of collective evaluation. There appear to be few attempts that respond to Rost's call. This study attempted to pick up on that challenge. To the extent it does so, it may contribute to redefining the nature of leadership and leadership ethics (Rost, 1993).

This is the centerpiece of the significance of this study. It seeks to find out how leaders engage in moral discourse and how they make moral judgments in collaboration with their constituents. It investigates those processes in ways that are rooted in a communitarian ethic that is dialogical, consequentialist, non-coercive, and respectful of the freedom of all participants. The fruit of such discourse may have deep symbolic implications for the construction of non-rational, tacit, and affective knowledge within groups. The moral discourse can move organizations to deeper levels of communication that deal with meaning, value, myth, belief, symbol, and ritual. When leaders facilitate this kind of process, they reframe the culture of organizations (Bolman & Deal, 1991; 1995). Their organizations make a transition toward becoming moral communities empowered with capacity to effect real change (Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994, 1996). Such organizations then become more than systems designed to achieve particular objectives. They develop into vibrant communities where the people who comprise them are bound up with their mutual well being (McCoy, 1985). In this sense, work organizations become communities of solidarity, where the moral significance of human interaction is readily acknowledged and constitutive of the organization's culture (Brown, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1993). All of this presents new challenges to leadership in

those organizations that function as moral communities. If leaders are change agents and moral discourse is the process for effecting transformational change, then leaders' capacity to affect moral discourse becomes the means par excellence for fulfilling the leadership function. To be a facilitator of moral dialogue within an organization is to be an agent of change. To engage others in moral discourse is to be a transformational leader. To the extent this study develops that dynamic, it can be heuristic, contributing to the knowledge of leadership ethics in a postmodern and postindustrial paradigm.

But this study has significance for other reasons as well. The relationship between moral discourse and the renewal of democracy is paramount. Burns (1978), Foster (1989) and Wheatley (1999) stress the point that authentic leadership is almost always political, not managerial, and that the nature of real transformational change involves the long term. New approaches to leadership theory and practice must be found that speak to this political dimension in hopes of dealing with the crises within our social institutions, the problem of civic disengagement, and growing citizen frustration with conventional political leadership. To that end, this study builds on Foster's political-historical model by posturing an approach to leadership ethics interpreted in the context of politics, history, and the use of power to bring about change. In doing so, it contributes in some small way to the reconstruction of leadership (Foster, 1986) and underscores its essential critical nature. In this context, transformational leadership is synonymous with collective critical thinking and holds promise of serving as the springboard to moral and political action.

As exploratory studies often do, this investigation also has significance for future research in that it may bring forth helpful concepts and theoretical constructs. In particular, as a qualitative study, this research identified categorical variables that might be used in quantitative studies seeking related knowledge. At the same time, those who are more familiar with traditional quantitative methods will need assurances that my

research goal is not so much aimed to establish knowledge as objective truth as much as it is about a postmodern quest for meaning and insight into the experience of leaders who strive to build moral communities within their organizations.

Finally, educators will hopefully find in this work some helpful implications for theories and practices of citizenship education. In particular, the study sheds some understanding on the mislaid mission of adult education to nurture civic responsibility (Miller, 1995). The interface with the renewal of communitarian political thought makes the study particularly relevant to contemporary shifts toward more participatory modes of democracy. Given the lack of disciplined inquiry in adult civic education as well as the criticism laid upon communitarianism for a lack of research supporting its rich theoretical base, this study can add to the development of knowledge in both areas. In doing so, educators are challenged to shape all social institutions into vehicles for lifelong learning. The results can only contribute toward more responsible citizen participation that sustains democracy and the public good. Beyond our schools, that challenge applies to all organizations, whether they be in the private, public, or social sector.

Point of View of the Researcher and Related Limitations

In Chapter Three I lay out a rationale for the qualitative methodology used to undertake this investigation. Given the nature of qualitative inquiry, as researcher, I was the primary instrument for collecting and analyzing the data. Such an approach presents both assets and liabilities. As researcher, I was driven by my own role as active producer of the research endeavor (Mooney, 1975). Rather than being impersonal and detached, I was actively engaged as the research questions came forth out of my own experience and my desire to learn and make meaning regarding the phenomena of leadership and moral discourse. Accordingly, throughout the study, I often write in the first person. In the closing chapter I offer remarks about the study's impact on me, the researcher.

My own life story provided me a context for the research journey and gave me a passion and confidence for engaging the inquiry. My knowledge as an adult education practitioner, my years of social activism and education for peace and justice, and my own struggle in defining normative social ethics convinces me of the critical need to create venues for moral conversation. Past experience in dimensions of community life have reinforced my interest in a communitarian worldview. Further, my professional experience as a convener of group processes, as well as an earlier pilot study on civic values, contributed to a confidence in my capacity to carry out the study. My motivation was also fueled by a hope to apply the findings to my future professional endeavors.

I have brought to this study both my passion and connoisseurship (Eisner, 1991), while recognizing the risks associated with my own personal biases. Subjectivity becomes both an asset and a liability. My past experience provides me a certain level of expertise and intensity of focus to investigate a phenomenon that has not been sufficiently researched. But I am conscious of the inherent limitations, as that same experience and expertise raises the risk of research bias. As discussed in Chapter Three, my methodology strived to manage that risk in ways to minimize the threat of researcher bias. Yet the risks were offset by the many assets. I approached this study self-assured in the legitimacy of my own suppositional frames and assumed a posture of committed research (Griffiths, 1998) grounded in the confidence of my own life experience. The process required of me a tolerance for ambiguity, sensitivity to intuitive processes, as well as competency in my own communication and facilitation skills in order to engage empathic and trusting relationships with the participants in the study (Merriam, 1998).

This chapter has served to lay out an overview of the study and its significance. It frames the study within the context of the research question that gives it meaningful

context. I have defined some basic terms, assumptions, and intellectual frames that will be further explicated in the review of the literature in Chapter Two. The qualitative methodology of the study and the procedures used for data collection and analysis are described in Chapter Three. The substance of the data is presented in Chapter Four and takes the form of a descriptive analysis of the phenomenon of moral discourse. Those findings are subsequently interpreted in the contexts of the workplace and civil society and are presented in Chapter Five. Chapter Six presents an overall summary of the study, a reconsideration of the relevancy of moral discourse to transformational leadership processes, other general observations, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Before entering the stage of data collection, I undertook an extensive review of the literature in several overlapping bodies of knowledge in order to explicate major themes that bear upon my research question. In doing so, my intention was to cultivate a landscape of inquiry that could provide me a broad contextual framework to serve the need for subsequent interpretation of my qualitative data. To that extent, my literature review began initially as a mapping endeavor to focus the research question prior to data collection. But as is typical in qualitative research, the review process was recursive, requiring me to revisit the literature and interpret it in the context of a reference base for subsequent data analysis (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 1993).

I consider four major literature areas: (1) critical transformational leadership and its relationship to moral discourse and leadership ethics within organizations and democratic society; (2) the growing body of literature on contemporary communitarian political theory and policy development as well as its concomitant call for the renewal of civil society and the reconstruction of the common good amidst social pluralism; (3) the literature that is relevant to democracy's formative challenge through education, particularly under the rubrics of moral education, civic education, adult education and critical pedagogy; and (4) a review of Critical Theory, moral development, and discourse ethics, particularly demonstrating how the latter contributes to an emerging praxis for moral discourse. Each of the four areas of the literature review concludes with a summary of major considerations relevant to my research question.

In order to capture the interface among the areas, I have constructed a visual model (Figure 1) demonstrating how the four literature bodies serve to focus my primary research question. Beyond the literature references included herein, my research

involved the development of a more substantial annotated working bibliography in excess of 600 sources.

Figure 1.

A schema that focuses the research question in the context of the literature review.

How do transformational leaders facilitate public moral dialogue in the workplace and civil society?
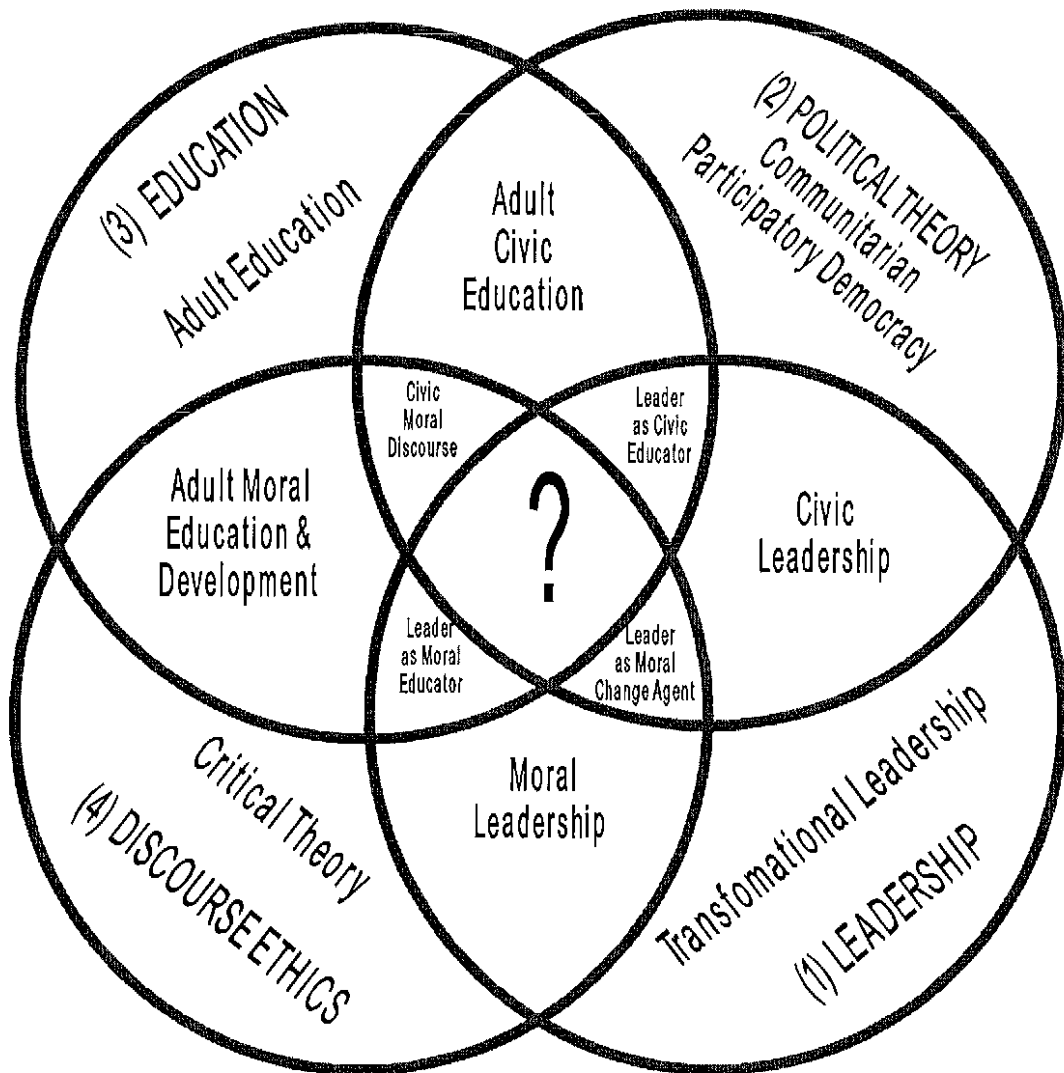
Transformational Leadership as Critical Leadership

Since its emergence some twenty years ago, transformational leadership theory

and practice continues to grow extensively, contributing to organizational development in

wide circles including industry, education and public administration. Transformational

leadership goes beyond more traditional approaches to leadership that are singularly

focused on individual leader's traits, behaviors, and situational contexts. As developed

by Burns, transformational leadership theory is fundamentally relational and morally

reflective and happens "when one or more persons engage with others in a way that

leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality"

(Burns, 1978, p. 20). It is moral in that it raises levels of human conduct and ethical

aspiration, directly influencing the actions of individuals and the organization. The result

is a transforming impact on participants and the organization itself.

Transformational leadership provides context for the enhanced practice of

participatory management that empowers others, facilitates redefinition of mission and

vision, evokes commitment, and instills enthusiasm. Other authors have used it as the

theoretical framework that subsumes a variety of related themes including the leader's

role as one who instills vision (Bennis, 1986), builds credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 1993),

inspires and builds organizational affinity through charismatic leadership (Conger, 1985;

House, 1976), provides value added incentives that motivate employees (Bass, 1985),

functions as change agent (Tichy & Devanna, 1990), creates impetus for changing

organizational culture (Schein, 1992), and forms moral communities (Sergiovanni, 1992).

All share a common approach that sees leadership as highly interactive, communicative,

relational, and value-laden, with an intent that facilitates change through emergence of

shared values that empower persons to maximize their human capacities in the context

of the organization's mission and purpose. Transformational leadership is fundamentally

a process of building communities of morally reflective persons who become self motivated to affect change by acting collaboratively in accordance with shared values.

<div align="center">Transformational Leadership Re-defined</div>

Despite its wide appeal, the manner in which transformational leadership has been applied by theorists has come under criticism by several who believe its fundamental principles have been misunderstood and manipulated to serve other ends (Foster, 1986, 1989; Rost, 1991, 1993, 1995; Tierney, 1989). Chief among them is Rost who postures that Burns' ideas have been largely co-opted by proponents who are locked in a former industrial paradigm of leadership. Rost identifies two major problems that define that former approach. First, leadership continues to be confused with the leader as person, overshadowing the relational process between leaders and followers. Secondly, leadership is often assimilated into classical notions of good management, where "good" means effective productivity rather than the moral sense of the word. In the industrial paradigm, leadership is about "great men and great women" who possess desired traits that effectively influence followers to do what leaders wish for purposes of achieving organizational goals. The focus remains on the leader as an individual and on the managerial aim for increased performance. In this model, leadership is the ability of the leader-person to gain support among followers to act on the leader's vision and agenda.

Rost's critique accentuates the relational, dialogical and ethical dimensions of transformational leadership in a post-industrial paradigm. He puts forth a new definition that captures that context: "Leadership is an influence relationship among both leaders and followers who intend real change which reflects their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1991). Elaborating, (1) the influence relationship involves a multidirectional exchange of power influence that is non-coercive; (2) both leaders and followers are actively engaged in the

process; (3) because they intend real change, the engagement presupposes an ethical process leading to moral commitment and substantive change; (4) the process hinges on capacity to form a community of believers with shared values that sustain mutual purposes.

Underlying Rost's approach is a political dimension of leadership that deals with the dynamics of moral discourse within democratic society, involving notions of civic virtue and participatory democracy. The challenge to leadership must go beyond the confines of the immediate goals of the organization and provide ethical import to the larger society. Leadership is what leaders and collaborators do together to change organizations and society. The process moves back and forth among leaders and followers, in an episodic fashion that is context specific yet continually changing within history and community. Because it is political, it looks to the long term through an evolving dialogical process that engages people symbolically on deeper levels of meaning, value, myth and beliefs (Wheatley, 1999). Values are sustaining rather than regulatory, allowing for an interaction with the environment that is inclusive and adaptive, embodying a process which sustains meaningful life and community, while preserving individual identity. In this mode, transformational leadership speaks to the essence of our deepest democratic aspirations (Sessions, 1995).

Rost bases much of his critique on the writings of Foster and Tierney (Foster, 1986, 1989; Tierney, 1989; Tierney & Foster, 1989) who call for a reconstruction of leadership in ways that it becomes more critically charged. Their approach goes beyond the functionalism that underlies much of the positivistic and behavioral approaches in leadership studies. Instead, they call for a critical approach that is grounded in the praxis of Critical Theory (Habermas, 1979, 1984). Genuine transformational leaders envision new social conditions and engage followers in the critical communicative processes that are necessary for the creation of new social realities and the quest for justice. Foster

(1989) suggests four ingredients for a new model of leadership that builds community and empowers participants to create social change: (1) leadership must be critical of existing structures in light of the ideals of freedom and democracy; (2) leadership must be transformative, leading to social change by raising the community's consciousness; (3) leadership must be critically educative (Fay, 1977) by facilitating both analysis and vision within the community of leaders and followers, such that new alternative ways of ordering our lives can emerge; and (4) leadership must be ethical, serving to reveal within the community an understanding of the good life.

Beyond transforming organizations, critical transformational leadership must be about transforming people and society by raising the consciousness of others in ways that empower and emancipate (Tierney & Foster, 1989). Critical leadership operates more within the mutuality of a centrachy rather than a hierarchy. Transformational leadership is not so much about organizations and leader-persons as it is about communities of persons engaged in mutual processes of empowerment and emancipation. Its processes are the very means for advancing democracy. Hence, the aim of transformational leadership is the advancement of democracy by empowering and emancipating persons. Accordingly, it may exist among any group of persons who are concerned with the advancement of democratic practice within their organization. Through dialogue and moral reflection, we are able to recreate our world. Ultimately, the leader is one who initiates, promotes, and nurtures that dialogue.

<center>Transformational Leadership and Moral Discourse</center>

There is an increasing body of literature that demonstrates an empirical link between transformational leadership and the moral development of leaders (Dukerich, Nichols, Elm, & Vollrath, 1990; Graham, 1995; Turner, Barling, Epitropaki, Butcher, & Milner, In press). Those studies demonstrate that transformational leaders are more likely to raise the moral reflectivity of others in ways that value altruistic aims and

concerns for the common good. They communicate "higher order behaviors" that "transmit goals that go beyond immediate self-interest, providing a mutually desirable ideal toward which leaders and followers alike can strive" (Turner et al., In press). But these studies do not explain how transformational leaders actually communicate their values in forms of moral conversation. Bird, Westley and Waters (1989) did a study that investigated the communication functions of moral talk by leaders, but there was no attempt to demonstrate any relationship to one or another leadership style. In a later work, Bird (1996) offers practical suggestions on how to bring moral discourse into the workplace. But his focus is limited to business ethics, as he draws no application to transformational leadership theory and practice.

I am suggesting moral discourse, and specifically moral discourse that is dialogical, emerges as the critical praxis for doing genuine transformational leadership. It is a means to organizational learning, enabling the kinds of processes that emulate double loop learning (Argyris, 1977; Argyris & Schoen, 1977; Oser, 1986; Senge, 1990). Moral dialogue makes possible the generative discourse that brings forth new insight by thinking outside the constraints of pre-determined organizational ends, policies and procedures grounded in the status quo. Through moral reflection, policy and practice can be questioned, errors can be detected, and appropriate moral action taken that is consonant with the shared values that underlie the organization's identity as a community. Though always mindful of respecting the freedom of others, a transformation leader advances moral discourse that facilitates the formation of shared values that become the impetus to change organizational culture. A transformational leader ferments and facilitates that discourse without being driven by the up-front need to set direction and change; rather, one is primarily concerned with engaging constituents with an expectation of change that is forthcoming.

Consequently, the extensive literature on organizational culture and change is also relevant to my discussion of transformation leadership and moral discourse (Kotter, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Schein, 1992). The leader's charisma, knowledge, and moral authority, coupled with the advocacy of an inspiring vision and a commitment to engage followers in generative discourse, creates an organizational culture of inquiry and dialogue (Nielson, 1990; Szabo, 1996). This dialogic leadership facilitates assessment of underlying values and assumptions that shape and ultimately redefine the organization. The leader initiates moral discourse by articulating dimensions of an unfolding vision and by asking questions that serve to evoke substantive dialogue on core values as opportunities for reflectivity present themselves in moral educational situations (Oser, 1986). The dialogical engagement integrates followers' individually held values and stimulates the emergence of commonly shared values that reshape organizational culture. The linkage creates a bonding, a solidarity of mutual values, and a moral community that becomes common ground and the foundation for revitalizing organizational mission and vision. In so doing, the organization becomes a moral community because its identity is formed by its values, beliefs and commitments (Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994, 1996).

<u>Transformational Leadership Ethics</u>

There is general agreement that ethical leadership in organizations requires an end to the traditional separation of personal and public morality (Bellah et al., 1991; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996). Yet, there is little systematic development of leadership ethics and how it is practiced in the context of moral discourse. Rost (1991) cites a general lack of literature, except for limited studies in professional ethics. But most of those deal with administrative and managerial concerns, with little bearing on principles that underlie transformational leadership. More recently, Lashway (1996) and Ciulla (1998b) demonstrate that the dearth of literature linking leadership and ethics continues. Ciulla

underscores the paucity of research on the topic in Bass (1990) which is considered the source book on leadership research. With 914 pages and 37 chapters documenting the comprehensive history of leadership theory and research, there is a scant two-page mention of the topic in the book's final chapter.

Older leadership theories such as trait, style, situational, and contingency theory are not very helpful to an understanding of ethics as they are not relational, are overly functional, and are not concerned with formulation of goals, vision and mission development. Followers are seen simply as reactors to leaders' actions. These approaches are of limited value for two principal reasons. First, they are individualistic because they place the onus of organization ethics on the behaviors and actions of individual persons, most particularly the leader-person. Lashway's review illustrates how moral leadership is fixated almost singularly on the integrity that binds the individual leader's personal values with individual actions. Other individualistic approaches emphasize the leader's communication skills (Meiswinkel, 1988), the leader's role as servant (Greenleaf, 1977), as well as the charismatic effect of leader altruism (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996).

Secondly, traditional notions of leadership ethics are often deficient because they confine their focus to the ethics of means while overlooking ends. The predisposed ends of the organization typically lie outside the domain of ethical reflection, demonstrating that this orientation to ethics is driven by the old paradigm of organizational productivity. This kind of approach limits leadership ethics to the means that leaders use to successfully garner the non-coerced respect, devotion, and emotional attachment of their followers as measured in trust, commitment and employee loyalty. As valuable as those factors may be for successful organizations, their ethical underpinnings do not stimulate the evaluation of systems and structures and say nothing about ends. They only provide means to support the unquestioned ends of the organization's purpose as it

is conceived and articulated by the leader. This approach clearly befits the functional, bureaucratic-managerial model of the industrial paradigm. It is self regulated, generally not accountable to wider systems and norms of behavior, and often elitist because it is defined by a dominant group preoccupied with a myopic focus on professional ethics, procedural norms and other protocol.

What I am seeking goes beyond these limitations. I am looking for a way for leaders and their followers to make collaborative moral decisions and to act in ways that affirm the common good. But how is that determined in shared discourse and what does that process say about our understanding of transformational leadership ethics? What is missing is the dialogical encounter and the dynamics that underscore the leader-follower relationship, placing leadership ethics as a function of the discourse group within a community context. To do that will require an understanding of social ethics that speaks in categories of corporate virtue, or what Selznick (1992) describes as organizational character. Leadership that invokes social ethics must be concerned with more than simply raising the morality of leader and follower. It concerns itself with raising the moral expectations of organizations and the wider society. To do that, Rost (1991, 1995) suggests that we move beyond a concern with the process of ethics as is typically demonstrated in practices and procedures that deal with professional ethics. Rather, we must also be concerned with the content of ethics. The latter has to do with the purposes and ends that our organizations serve. Those ends must serve to build up the betterment of society at large. This will require leadership ethics that goes beyond issues of personal responsibility and personal morality. It calls for leadership ethics that advance the common good by nurturing the formation of civic virtue that can sustain mutual commitment to the commonwealth.

Leadership ethics must be concerned with both, process and content. Process has to do with the means of how ethical decisions are made, where leaders and

followers freely agree to the intended changes that fairly reflect their mutual purposes in ways that are non-coercive, non-manipulative, and non-authoritarian. Content has to do with the moral acceptability of the ethical decisions, the ends, the decisions, the goals, and the mission of the organization. But Rost (1991) cites two impediments that need to be overcome. First, we must deal with the problem posed by a pluralistic culture having different values and belief systems. Secondly, we lack the necessary moral language that can facilitate a meaningful assessment of what constitutes the common good.

Rost puts forth no formal method to resolve these difficulties. But he does paint some guidelines that give shape to what he calls a new paradigm for transformational leadership ethics, one that provides a helpful context for unpacking the meaning and practice of public moral conversation in an age of postmodernism. This new ethical approach must be group oriented, not individualistic, and therefore cannot emanate from classical moral theories that are ontological, utilitarian, situational or based on social contract. Without resorting to the pitfalls of moral relativism, Rost appeals to the need for some form of normative ethics that can be grounded in a communitarian approach that affirms the common good by transcending the boundaries imposed by the pluralism of culture, gender, race and ethnic identification. He seems to be echoing Dewey's (1916) call for the advancement of "social intelligence," suggesting that the good life is an ongoing and unfolding process of moral reflection on life experience. That process leads to moral action that brings about individual growth and social transformation. Like Dewey, Rost calls forth a prescription for liberal democracy. But to do so will require that we move beyond an ethics of personal responsibility to a communitarian ethics based in the moral language of civic virtue that articulates the common good and public interest.

To summarize, much of the application of transformational leadership has been manipulated to serve the ends of an older structural-functional industrial paradigm that is

management oriented and singularly focused on the traits and behaviors of the leader-person. A corrective is called for that emphasizes the relational and critical context of leadership. Genuine transformational leadership accentuates the need to build commitment in organizations by creating venues for moral conversation that make possible the formation of moral communities. It builds community among morally reflective persons who are empowered to collaboratively work together to change organizations and society in ways that enhance the ideals of participatory democracy. Transformational leadership is fundamentally a relational process among both leaders and followers, employing moral conversation in order to surface shared values, commitments and beliefs. It is both political and ethical in nature, intending real change within organizations and society. It envisions new social realities and engages followers in the critical communication process that is necessary for change to occur. To be effective, the discourse must be ethical in both process and content as it considers means and ends in ways that transcend the constraints of individualism and pluralism. Finally, transformational leadership contributes to a renewal of public philosophy within democratic society by nurturing among its constituents the formation of civic virtue that values and sustains the common good.

Communitarian Public Philosophy and the Quest for Shared Values

In recent years a resurgence of communitarian political theory has captured the interests of academicians, social commentators and policy makers on both the left and right. This review focuses on the body of literature that has emerged since the 1980s. Those works build upon elements of communitarian thought espoused by classic political philosophers (Aristotle, 1958; Mill, 1859/1989; Rousseau, 1762/1950; Tocqueville, 1835), sociologists (Durkheim, 1893; Nisbet, 1953; Tonnies, 1957), and social philosophers (Buber, 1970; Dewey, 1916). Overviews can be found in the early

chapters of Etzioni's seminal work (1996), Bell (1993) and Galston (1993). These authors emphasize that the communitarian label in some cases is self-subscribed (Bellah et al., 1985; Bellah et al., 1991; Eberly, 1994; Glendon, 1991; Selznick, 1992). Other writers (MacIntyre, 1984; Sandel, 1996; Taylor, 1989; Walzer, 1983) either avoid the term or specifically deny the communitarian label, yet there are definitive communitarian undercurrents to their thinking. Communitarians walk the dichotomy between the left and the right. Some, such as Bellah, Etzioni, Galston and Taylor, are liberal communitarians. Others, like Glendon and MacIntyre, reflect a more conservative orientation.

Communitarianism Defined

Communitarians advocate a political agenda that seeks to bridge the chasm between the poles of individual rights and responsibility to the community. On one hand, communitarians affirm the classic liberal commitment to personal freedom and the development of human potential through appropriate government intervention. But on the other, they affirm elements of a conservative agenda that accentuate the need for individual responsibility, voluntary compliance with community shared mores, and limited government intrusion. Communitarians seek to engage core values that can unite diverse interests groups. They present a strategy for remoralizing society by nurturing the understanding of shared values. Those values are key to a renewed public philosophy, the revival of civil society, and the public good.

Communitarians are interested in redefining the meaning of community. They draw images akin to community as gemeinschaft (Tonnies, 1957), with an emphasis on personalism and face to face interactions through family, church and neighborhood. But their approach is no appeal to parochialism or nostalgia. Bellah et al. (1985) challenge us to see community in a larger frame, where it is not a place or group per se, but rather a set of attributes that create a web of social relationships built around shared meanings

and values. More importantly, communitarians seek to formulate a contemporary public philosophy (Sandel, 1996) by developing a basis for redefining society's understanding of the common good.

A critical theme among communitarians is the effort to advocate a middle ground that seeks equilibrium between the excesses of liberalism and social conservatism (Etzioni, 1996). They seek a balance between one's obligation to the individual and to the community. The means to attain this balance is neither mandated through state social services, one form of liberalism, nor the social conservatism of state imposed morality. Instead, the primary means is voluntary compliance to community norms based on the community's shared values. Though communitarians are critical of social conservatives who promote a coercive moral order imposed by the state, they hold that many of the concerns of social conservatives are legitimate. For instance, Americans increasingly believe that a collapse in social morality and civility is at the heart of a growing discontent and civic disengagement among citizens (National Commission on Civic Renewal, 1998).

The viability of communitarian alternatives was validated in the results of a survey of attitudes among U.S. citizens (Karp, 1997; Survey Research Center, 1996). That data suggest that Americans are changing the way they align their political orientation. The former paradigm delineated left from right largely in terms of citizens' perceptions of the role of the individual as distinguished from the role of government. In the past, the primary coordinates were defined in categories of economics and social issues, and the political economy was shaped primarily by the relationship between the market and the state. Both Karp and Tam (1998) propose that in the newer paradigm, the determining category that increasingly shapes citizens' political views has more to do with moral order than economic order, and thus reflects communitarian considerations. Fishkin (1991) argues that a person's communitarian position on public policy issues

may be not be initially self evident where substantive civic discourse is lacking. Communitarian positions are neither self-interested and often are not intuitive, but subsequently arise in the context of thoughtful consideration in forums of public deliberation.

<u>The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism</u>

This perspective shift that accentuates the moral social order is foundational to the communitarian agenda and poses a particular criticism to the exaggerated individualism in the contemporary liberal state. The foundations of classic liberalism have their roots in the Enlightenment and the belief in humankind's capacity to attain self fulfillment through rationality and a utilitarian ethic grounded in principles of individual liberty and self-determination (Locke, 1690; Mill, 1859/1989; Smith, 1937). Contemporary liberal thinkers (Ackerman, 1981; Dworkin, 1977; Rawls, 1971) have broadened this notion to include principles of egalitarianism and distributive justice. But communitarians point to the confusion in our modern understanding of liberalism. In popular parlance, liberals are seen as those who support state secured rights of the individual, typically advanced through big government's support for social welfare. This group represents one particular wing of liberalism, so-called "welfare liberals" (Etzioni, 1996); the other wing includes liberals, often inappropriately labeled "conservatives," who typically promote a disdain for big government. The latter include libertarians and laissez fare free-enterprise advocates who are liberal in the classic sense because they place pre-eminence on individual autonomy and rights, including the absolute rights of property and privacy. Thus, according to the old paradigm that defined the political axis in terms of economics and state-secured social justice, liberals can be on the left or the right.

Unbounded individualism and a preoccupation with "rights talk" lead liberals to advocate a thin social order with a minimal sense of the common good (Selznick, 1992). Communitarians, however, call for a thicker social order that places greater emphasis on the common good. They argue that liberalism postures an excessive individualism imbued with an exaggerated notion of the unencumbered self, and that this has radically diminished the sense of the common good. They counter that the notion of individual self-determination is an illusion. We are encumbered selves by virtue of our participation in history, context, and a host of obligations that make up the constitutive communities that define our identify (Bell, 1993). These include communities of place, communities of memory, and psychological communities that impose some level of obligation upon us. By denying our social embeddedness, liberalism risks regressing into atomism and the collapse of meaningful society (Durkheim, 1893). Our embeddedness in community affiliations constructs our sense of personhood and identity in a dialectic that moves between free choice and social-moral obligation. We are connected in a web of social relationships, and they pose certain limits on our freedom and liberty. To deny that is to renounce our fundamental social nature which contributes to the development of our person (Dewey, 1988a; Joyce, 1994; MacIntyre, 1984; Rest, 1986).

In liberal society, each individual is left to pursue his or her own perception of the good. There is little means to define the public, common good. The principle of neutrality prohibits the state from engaging in efforts to define the public good. There can be no place in the public sphere where ideas and opinions rooted in values and a sense of the good can circulate freely (Sullivan, 1995). Thus, communitarians argue that liberalism has lost the language to engage in meaningful moral reflection (Bellah et al., 1985; MacIntyre, 1984). Neuhaus (1984) describes the phenomenon of the "naked public square," a neutralized empty space void of values, beliefs, and religious and spiritual sentiments, where individuals are unable to engage in non-coercive participation in

purposes beyond the economic and private. The public square is hermetically sealed from substantive conceptions of the good life because there is no room for moral discourse, moral teaching, the influence of values, or non-rational expressions of the human psyche (Grasso, Bradly, & Hunt, 1995). Yet, the viability of democratic society is directly tied to the health of its public sphere (Barber, 1984). In the absence of meaningful public moral conversation in the liberal state, there is little rationale for the community to determine what is the public good. The good becomes arbitrary, simply a matter of personal choice, and is always trumped by rights (Glendon, 1991).

All this prompts a critique of how one understands the meaning of freedom. Communitarians suggest that the freedom that is so diligently safeguarded by liberals is really a negative freedom that has the effect of ungluing the social fabric because it denies freedom to the community to define its values and its understanding of the good. It is a "freedom-from" instead of a "freedom-to-do" the right thing. Ultimately, liberalism cannot provide the intellectual foundation for a free society (Grasso et al., 1995). Genuine liberty depends on sharing in self-government, deliberating with fellow citizens about the common good, and collaborating to shape the destiny of the political community (Sandel, 1996). But in the absence of that deliberative process, the liberal state is left with the sole charge of protecting individual rights through the proceduralism of constitutional law, the courts, and entitlements in the name of distributive justice. Sandel (1996) is critical of the shortcomings of those mechanisms of the bureaucratic state. Left to themselves, they risk an impoverishment of the meaning of democracy by cloaking it under the guise of a procedural republic that falls short of the deeper and richer meaning of civic republicanism that was the basis for the democracy envisioned by the Founders. Grounded in the rubrics of legalism, the American experiment eventually falls prey to an atrophy of democracy (Taylor, 1993).

Communitarian policymakers and analysts thus strive to inject values discussion in the discourse that shapes economic and public policy decisions. They maintain that there are normative-affective factors that stand in dialectic polarity with rationality and the logical-empirical approach, and that these elements influence our economic choices (Etzioni, 1988) as well as public opinion (Yankelovich, 1999). These dynamics present a communitarian corrective on market driven capitalism, economic theory, and policy development, and are reflected in contemporary shifts in the theory and practice of public administration and policy analysis. These approaches underscore the inadequacy of traditional cost-benefit policy analysis and the increased importance of assessing community values that legitimate public policy (Gilroy & Wade, 1992; Moore, 1995).

All this poses an important nuance in defining the meaning of public policy. A communitarian understanding of public policy is rooted in the experienced values as subscribed by the community. Many of those values are normative without being legally prescribed. Yet, communitarians do argue for a number of formal policy proposals such as those that support family life (Galston, 1990) and those that affirm the role of schools in contributing to values formation. The moral guidance we provide the young in our society is the litmus test of our capacity as a community (Popenoe, 1995).

Other communitarian policy recommendations are particularly poignant on issues that impact the first, second, and fourth amendments in the Bill of Rights. When considering if there should be laws against hate speech, pornography, and violence in the media, communitarians are less inclined to invoke the statist order more typically advanced by social conservatives. Instead, they are more likely to advocate strong voluntary community mechanisms rooted in moral concepts. Such mechanisms may include public demonstrations and boycotts, the media's refusal to print hateful op-ed pieces, public acts of shaming , and other nonviolent actions that resist behaviors that are an affront to the moral standards of the community. Yet, communitarians challenge

civil libertarians on the left to see the need for legal mechanisms that qualify the absoluteness of free speech and the right to bear arms. Galston (1991b) contrasts the need to differentiate between a legal right and the moral rightness of a behavior. However, communitarians are quick to caution against the adoption of policies that reinforce authoritarian measures that can construct a dangerously oppressive statist order (Etzioni, 1996). Such policies need to minimize side effects that undermine autonomy and avoid the dangerous slippery slope toward excessive measures advanced by social conservatives and authoritarian states.

Communitarians posture their approach as a way out of the impasse that has afflicted much policy debate caught up in liberal-conservative dualism (Galston, 1993). They promote progressive social values like freedom and human dignity, yet they affirm the traditional values of community. In doing so, they create space for new conversations that can surface constructive social change.

<u>Civil Society and Participatory Democracy</u>

The renewal of civil society is a consistent theme in the communitarian literature. Thinkers on both left and right share a concern about the decline in civic engagement and the need to rebuild a commitment to civic republicanism and participatory democracy (Eberly, 1994, 1998; Fukuyama, 1995; Fullinwider, 1999; National Commission on Civic Renewal, 1998; Popenoe, 1995; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Schudson, 1998). Civil society is the sphere of our everyday lives (Bradley, 1995), the personal realm governed by values of responsibility, trust, fraternity, solidarity and love. Civil society is the space "in-between" the private and the public spheres, the market and the state. Without it, the social order is unstable and vibrant democracy cannot be sustained. Galston describes civil society as the public sector, where the public is a small "p" as opposed to the capital "P" of the state (personal communication, May 8, 1998). It is that area where we live our lives in the context of a multitude of civic associations and

institutions that shape our culture. These include the workplace, church, non-profit organizations, fraternal and sports organizations, school PTAs and a host of local community and civic groups.

Tocqueville (1835) described this middle ground of civil society as "associations" or "intermediary" groups that provide the citizenry with mediating structures that enhance participatory democracy by serving as forums for dialogue and moral reflection on matters of public policy. He saw these groups as a vital component of the American experiment, a place where Americans carried out the important conversations that made democracy work. Modern day theorists see a need to restore the place of these intermediary groups if we are to bolster civil society and empower the citizenry (Berger & Neuhaus, 1996). The family, neighborhood, town meetings, labor organizations, schools, and churches are the seedbeds of virtue (Glendon & Blackenhorn, 1995) that form habits of the heart (Bellah et al., 1985). They shape the values that undergird the institutions that define the good society (Bellah et al., 1991). They are the fountainheads of social capital which represents the stock of social trust, norms and networks that people can draw upon to solve common problem. The denser these networks, the more likely members of a community are able to cooperate for mutual benefit. As more people are involved, the web of connectedness expands, strengthening the social fabric.

In 1995 Putnam wrote a controversial article in which he argued that America was becoming a nation of loners, increasingly pursuing self-centered interests, withdrawing from membership in civic organizations, and disengaging from groups. Others have argued that civic engagement has simply been redefined by other means evidenced by an increase in single-issue advocacy groups, the extraordinary expansion of youth soccer leagues, workplace-driven community volunteerism, and virtual civics in cyberspace (Ladd, 1999; Stengel, 1996). Yet, others are critical of these newer forms of engagement, judging them to be impersonal self-serving artificial communities of

convenience (Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999; Wolfe, 1998a). Through it all, Putnam withstood the criticism, corrected some faulty data, but maintained the position that America's civic life is in serious decline (Putnam, 2000). The result, he suggests, is a loss in social capital that has brought about the sharp decline in voter participation and volunteerism, a sense of powerlessness, political apathy, and a general withdrawal from matters of civic life.

Closely related to civil society is the concept of participatory democracy. Rimmerman (1991) identifies its three elements: (1) a sense of community identity; (2) the education and development of citizens; and (3) self-determination by those participating. In a participatory democracy, the citizens themselves are charged with a role in determining the political agenda and shaping public policy (Selznick, 1992). Communitarians suggest that civil society and participatory democracy are synergetic (Mansbridge, 1995). Civil society is the fuel that drives participatory democracy in the tradition of civic republicanism. Likewise, participatory democracy facilitates the formation of civic virtue as citizens are empowered by their own self-efficacy. By advocating its expansion, communitarians challenge those skeptics in the tradition of Madison and the Federalists who believe that broadening the net of participation leads to competing factions consumed in ideological conflict (Douglass, 1994). But there is a long tradition dating to Aristotle that suggests otherwise. Though there is limited empirical evidence to support the claim, the theory that participatory democracy builds civil society was validated in a study of participatory politics in five U.S. cities (Berry, Portney, & Thomson, 1993).

A vibrant civil society requires more than a minimalist citizenship centered on electoral politics and opinion polls. All life is politics because all life evokes the political discourse of decision-making carried out in relationship with others. Thus, civic republicanism is an integral component of living the full life, reflecting Aristotle's (trans.

1958) notion that one could only be fulfilled as a participant in the discourse of the polis. That engagement with others in pursuit of shared meaning imposes a constraint of self interest "rightly understood" (Schwartz, 1994). Political discourse does not merely serve to resolve disputes, but to generate good will, affiliation and commitment to the common good (Barber, 1984).

The understanding of democracy has been influenced by a dominant conception of citizenship that gives primacy to advancing private interests through mechanisms of electoral politics, civil liberties, rights, and procedural checks and balances (Newmann, 1989). But the checks and balances of the procedural republic alone are insufficient to reinforce and strengthen the ideals of democracy. They fail to call forth a vision of the public good, diminish the promise of empowering the governed, produce inequality, and ultimately deprive citizens of the means for critical civic discourse that can only be had within a participatory democracy (Barber, 1984; Bellah et al., 1985; Janowitz, 1983; Pratte, 1988). In a genuine participatory democracy, citizens monitor the potential abuse of a representative democracy that too often succumbs to a politics of elites, where active citizen involvement is replaced by bureaucracy and the professionalization of government functions defined in categories of politicians, providers, consumers, lobbyists and special interest groups (Boyte, 1994; Ostrom, 1993). Rather than a politics of advocacy carried out by professionals, participatory democracy is rooted in a politics of empowerment that enhances citizens' confidence that they can make a difference (Frank, 1999). The citizenry comes to experience government not as an external entity, but as a constitutive institution comprised of citizens themselves (Bellah et al., 1991). Thus, the restoration of civil society and participatory democracy is a pathway to restoring trust in government (Fukuyama, 1995).

Communitarians see the revival of civil society as an essential complement to devolution and a needed corrective to big government federalism (Hickok, 1994). They

look to other institutions besides the federal government to cultivate the civic virtue that can feed today's hunger for citizenship and shape public policy that impacts citizens in the context of their local communities. There is a growing sense among Americans that politics and government as usual are increasingly irrelevant to getting the job done locally (Kettering Foundation, 1998). The alternative is a growing development of grassroots movements by citizens who seek ways to organize outside government in order to deal with issues through non-governmental bodies and a resurgence of grassroots democracy (Ostrom, 1993). Communitarians see this as hopeful sign, a springtime for democracy, and a remedy for the political illness that infects the body politic. They affirm the principle of subsidiarity, that no social task should be allocated to a body larger than the smallest one that can effectively carry it out (Grasso et al., 1995). This requires a broadened understanding of citizenship as a web of civil institutions where people can express their connectedness and mutual obligation and reach beyond themselves to higher aspirations and more noble purposes (Joyce, 1994). Thus, communitarians call for more engaging styles of democracy that are strong (Barber, 1984), deliberative (Fishkin, 1991), and popularly based in vibrant civic organizations (Boyte, 1994).

<div align="center">The Problem of Multiculturalism and the Common Good</div>

At the heart of the communitarian agenda is the need to construct shared meaning as an authoritative interpretation of morality that reflects the character of the community (Bell, 1993). Shared meaning cannot be expected to assume unanimity but rather a reasonable moral consensus. This presents difficulties in dealing with dissenting opinions and beliefs of conflicting minorities. If shared meaning is based on shared values, the community must make a choice to determine which values are moral and appropriate, and which are not.

Communitarians acknowledge and celebrate the reality of multiculturalism and the social heterogeneity of community (Pratte, 1988). But this poses a challenge to the degree to which shared understanding of the common good can be constructed. Communitarians take seriously the objections posed by critics who see in it a dangerous moral relativism that can be distorted by the biases and prejudices of those who have power, at the expense of those who do not (Frazer & Lacey, 1993; Holmes, 1993; Kymlicka, 1993; McClain, 1994; Phillips, 1993). Such relativism can make for blind conformity to the status quo and resist change for social justice and transformation. It can also enshrine moral majoritarianism and authoritarianism and risk intolerance of minorities.

But communitarians also seek solutions to problems posed by those who are critical of multiculturalism's cult of ethnicity (Schlesinger, 1992) which drives the defensive reactions of an increasingly disempowered white majority (Maharidge, 1996). Such critics seek to protect a common national identity from assault in culture wars that reflect distinct divides in the values that Americans hold (Hunter, 1996). To the delight of communitarians, polls suggest that Americans really do share core values and that the notion that we are culturally divided with deep and fundamental differences may be largely overstated (Etzioni, 1999a).

A particularly significant study by Wolfe (1998b) concludes that though there is a rift among minority groups who hold extreme ideological positions, the great mass of middle class Americans really do share many common values. So-called culture wars do not so much represent a cultural divide, but rather a divide between sets of values, both of which are important to most all Americans. For instance, traditional values like God, family and country stand in a balanced relationship with freedom of choice values, personal rights like women's rights, and personal decisions regarding one's religious practice. They are not mutually exclusive and polarizing. Rather, they stand in dialectical

relationship with each other in ways similar to the interplay between Etzioni's two primary core values of autonomy and social order (Etzioni, 1996). So long as both are present, communitarians believe there is room for dialogue, resolution and moral consensus. When polarization results in perceived culture wars, it is more likely the result of intellectuals who carve out absolutist positions grounded in ideological principles that stand apart and distinct from the reality of the day to day experience of ordinary Americans (Wolfe, 1998b).

All this is to demonstrate that communitarians believe there is more unum amidst the pluribus than is suggested by radical multiculturalists who conclude there are few if any shared bonds and values amidst our diversity (Fine, 1995). In the latter view, democracy can only be defined in terms of a procedural republic that forever seeks to balance an expanding plethora of personal rights that become increasingly conflictual. We do not need to divest ourselves of plurality in order to achieve harmony. Ideas, not ethnicity, are what generates oneness and homogeneity in the United States (Suro, 1990) and so long as faith in those ideas is strong, the country has shown an extraordinary capacity to integrate people of diverse ethnicity. Communitarians conclude that if civic republicanism is about renewing commitment to democratic ideals, then it is an essential task that we incorporate the community of diverse minorities into the dialogic processes that shape the community's moral consensus.

In response to the criticism of those who see in communitarianism a dangerous moral relativism, it is essential that the all citizens have access to the dialogue process and that citizens think critically as they interpret the just and moral position that sustains the public good (Pratte, 1988). Despite the diversity of the community, moral discourse is possible, even when it engages different values or religious and ethical systems. In holding this position, communitarians stand up to the charge by social conservatives who believe moral consensus is impossible without some claim to objective moral truth.

Even conservatives who are sympathetic to communitarian theory and practice have doubts about citizens' capacity to engage in moral dialogue within a culture that has lost focus on traditional values and no longer has the language to do moral reflection (Bennett, 1993; MacIntyre, 1984). Others feel that moral dialogue can be counterproductive to solving problems. Boyte (1994) believes that moral consensus cannot be attained and cautions against engaging in moral discourse when conflicting groups have profound cultural differences. Attempts to seek moral consensus are liable to deepen the divide, without any way to bridge it. Instead, Boyte says, the way out is to focus on the problem and work together to resolve it, without getting into the murky waters of values and morality.

But Guiness (1994) argues that even when religious values are irreconcilable, it is still possible to engage moral conversation to unpack consensus around common core values. Community is not about silent consensus. It is a struggle through engaging argument and even conflict about the meaning of those values. Where consensus does emerge, it is the result of intelligent, shared, and reflected life. But it is a consensus that can be challenged and challenged again over time (Bellah, 1995). Though the process may not yield universalized norms that all agree to, moral consensus is possible because the benefits of toleration and cooperation outweigh whatever benefits there might be in antagonism (Gouinlock, 1986). At a minimum, we can come to agreement on what constitutes the "damaged life" as we identify generalizable interests around those values where we share vulnerability, for instance, environmental degradation and health hazards (Moon, 1995).

The communitarian solution is continual, cyclical and unfolding as shared values take shape in the context of reasoned discourse and the consequences related to what Dewey would call "ends-in-view" (Dewey, 1916). Through it all, there is a unity of purpose that motivates the moral dialogue (Taylor, 1992). Conclusions cannot be

preconceived by any participant in the dialogue. All players need to be open to the process that comes about through the conversation. Guiness calls this "chartered pluralism" and offers it as a way out of the moral impasse rooted in tribalism or unrestrained libertarianism. The process is driven by a moral compact that affirms the principle of human dignity that stands in dialectical relationship with self interest. It calls forth citizens' mutual responsibility to find solutions that uphold the good of the community (Pratte, 1988).

Communitarianism thus put forth a moderated pluralism that respects individual freedom and diversity without leading to social fragmentation, believing that it is possible to participate in public life without inflicting coercive action on others or being subjected by others' coercion. It cautions against an ethnic exclusivity that advocates an insular pluralism (Pratte, 1988), appealing to a need to rise above parochial group interests. A communitarian approach to pluralism avoids the extremes of a particularistic multiculturalism that neglects the bonds of mutuality among people of different groups and diminishes the emphasis on commonality of values (Ravitch, 1991). A communitarian approach moves beyond a "politics of difference" to a "politics of recognition" (Taylor, 1992). All human life is fundamentally dialogical. Through language and interaction with others, we come to understand and recognize one another, advancing the human development of both self and community. The result is a deliberative process of moral discourse that in the Deweyian tradition of social intelligence advances human growth, yields new insight and take us to new solutions and decisions previously unimagined.

A helpful image that emerges is that of the mosaic (Etzioni, 1996). Neither the melting pot of assimilation nor the rainbow of separatism, the metaphor captures the notion that we are all part of an encompassing whole. Though each piece maintains its color and shape, each is dependent on a relationship with other pieces, bound together

with glue and frame. There is a diversity within the unity, but that diversity is not aimless and without shared values. It has a distinct framework that provides means to assess accountability for morality writ small (Wolfe, 1998b), and it can change as the story of the community unfolds (Wishard, 1994). Etzioni offers several social, cultural, and legal elements of the framework: (1) a commitment to the democratic way of life; (2) mutual tolerance and respect; (3)personal responsibility for self and family; (4) shared responsibility to provide a good society and environment for our children; and (5) a commitment to practices of reconciliation among individuals as well as ethnic groups to attain forgiveness for past wrongs and injustices.

This framework not only bonds individual members within the community, it also links one community to another to create the bonds of society at large. Etzioni (1996) refers to this global perception as the "community of communities," comparable to Selznick's (1992) moral commonwealth among a "unity of unities." We participate in multiple and overlapping communities which create a built-in system of checks and balances to temper the potential for excesses that might lead to immoral actions and injustice within any one community. The process provides a normative corrective against the threat of majoritarianism. Ultimately, the community of communities is the entire human society. Just as the moral life of the community is discerned through processes of moral dialogue, so too is it necessary for cross-cultural dialogues to discern the moral challenges of a globalized human experience where nation-states will increasingly yield to a world community (Havel, 1999).

To summarize, communitarian political theory and policy attempts to give expression to a public philosophy grounded in the dynamics of participatory democracy and the tradition of American civic republicanism. It serves as a corrective to liberalism's distorted emphasis on individualism and personal rights by balancing it with an equal

concern for responsibility to a social order that sustains a base of shared meaning within community. Communitarianism underscores the need to uphold the common good in processes of democratic deliberation by acknowledging our social embeddedness within constitutive communities that shape our social context and organizational life. A communitarian approach to democratic practice moves beyond the constraints of proceduralism by calling for dynamic civic discourse that engages participants in the consideration of moral sentiment and values as citizens deliberate in the public sphere. Citizens' capacity to so participate is correlated to the degree to which social capital exists within civil society, creating the bonds of commitment and solidarity that shape a community's identity. This requires civic virtue sufficient to sustain a commitment to the common good amidst the diversity of values in a multicultural society. Through equal participation, critical reflection, and cross cultural dialogue, common shared values can be subscribed, sufficient to counter the risks of majoritarianism and separatism.

But there are significant gaps in the knowledge base of communitarianism that must be addressed. The literature demonstrates a general lack of empirical research that explains how communitarian theory and practice function within the dynamics of civic moral discourse. What are the shared core values that define the community? How does the discourse take place? Communitarians need to better address the dynamics of power by integrating feminist perspectives and Critical Theory (Frazer & Lacey, 1993). Its policy formulations need to more effectively deal with pressing issues of social and economic justice. And communitarians continue to be vulnerable to the charge that the proof of their theory must become evidenced in practical programs and policy applications ("Freedom and Community," 1994-95; Walker, 1993). In particular, there is a need to develop workable models for engaging the deeper levels of civic discourse that bring to surface the values and moral talk that lay at the heart of its approach to the renewal of participatory democracy. This will require innovate approaches to the

formation of civic virtue in programs of civic education. And to that literature, I now proceed.

Democracy's Formative Challenge and the Role of Education

Communitarians suggest that the debate over civic engagement can miss the central feature of civil society that presumes the formation of virtuous citizens. Even Tocqueville felt that voluntary associations are no cure-all and that they need to be comprised of citizens who have good character. It is not sufficient to simply revitalize civil society; the more urgent task is to re-moralize it (Himmelfarb, 1995). Left to itself, the social capital that undergirds civil society is neutral and inadequate to the task (Etzioni, 1996; Galston, 1991a); to be effective, social capital must be complemented with moral capital (Berkowitz, 1999). Without this moral dimension, civil society is only a technical mechanism of the procedural republic ensuring mere tolerance, good manners, norms of communication and rational deliberation.

The Founding Fathers presupposed a high degree of virtue among American citizens. A good person will be a good citizen (Pratte, 1988). Sandel (1996) suggests that we have forgotten that. Left unattended, virtue will gradually corrupt, leaving a result that eventually undermines democracy. Unlike the invisible hand that shapes the free market, the formation of good citizens does not come about automatically in a self-organizing manner through the simple pursuit of competing self interests (Galston, 1995). In the tradition of civic republicanism, democracy seeks to transcend those self interests in order to attain the greater good of the community as a whole (Sandel, 1996). This requires a commitment to formative politics that cultivates in citizens the qualities of character and the habits of the heart that make self-government possible. More than the delivery of goods and services, the highest good of politics is the fostering of moral communities that uphold the common life of its citizens (Grasso et al., 1995). That function is at the heart of much educational theory and practice. I now consider the

literature that addresses how education fosters the skills and virtues essential to the maintenance of democracy. In particular, I review the relevant literature from educational theory and practice, beginning with the moral aims of education. From there, I move into the practice of civic education, character education and moral education. I conclude this section with applications from adult education and critical pedagogy.

<div align="center">The Aims of Education</div>

There has been a long tradition linking the purposes of education to social transformation and the development of democracy. For Aristotle (trans.1958) and the ancient Greeks, education was a function of the polis carried on by the whole community, with the aim of educating citizens into a life of virtue that could sustain democracy. In the tradition of John Dewey (1916) and Jane Addams (1930), all life is education and when the whole community educates, education becomes life enabling. Early practitioners like Horace Mann (Cremin, 1957) and Dewey saw the purpose of schools as serving this task of educating students to become full participants in democratic civil society. For Dewey, participation in democracy was a dimension of the social efficacy of education, where the mind forms through social intelligence that leads to ongoing and enfolding knowledge of a moral society based on shared meaning. Education and moral development is a lifelong process pursuing a continual goal toward growth of both person and society. It involves a progressively constructivist process of finding new meaning by continually reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming human experience.

But critics charge that this fertile understanding of education has deconstructed as the contemporary preeminent educational philosophy aligns itself with the interests of utilitarian individualism (Bellah et al., 1991). They charge that the educational enterprise has become narrowly focused on technical knowledge serving market driven economies, to the exclusion of practical and emancipatory knowledge that integrates moral vision

and political insight (Welton, 1993). Most students, they argue, do not sufficiently devote

themselves to critical inquiry that can make that happen. Instead, they pursue their own

personal economic advancement. Many graduate and enter not the world but the limiting

field of the marketplace where they lack an integrating framework that can make sense

of their larger reality. They find themselves caught in the breach between the "cognitive

complex" and the "moral-evaluative complex" of education (Parsons & Platt, 1973, cited

in Bellah et al., 1991, p. 166). The latter has largely been forsaken as a result of the

great divorce between facts and values (Brown, 1990; Ellison, 1995; Yankelovich, 1999);

yet the interplay between the two are necessary to the process of civic discourse as the

public comes to make judgments (Yankelovich, 1999).

If we are to nurture the good society, Bellah et al. (1991) challenge us to innovate

and reinvent the function of education so that it equips students with not only scientific-

cognitive skills, but moral-evaluative ones as well. The moral dimension of the

educational enterprise legitimates affective knowledge that enables human beings to

contextualize their civic discourse within life experience and to communicate that reality

in meaningful ways. That process creates bonds of commitment that build community

and solidarity, sustaining a vision for civil society that stands as a counterpoint to the

increasing hegemony of the free market (Yankelovich, 1999). This kind of reflection and

discourse affirms and gives credence to the proper place of beliefs, values, religious

faith, dispositions, feelings, and "habits of the heart" (Bellah et al., 1985). It enables

students to make sense of the expanding base of cognitive knowledge in a society

where knowledge is viewed as the primary commodity in a globalized economy

(Drucker, 1994). The task is to find means that equip the citizenry with process skills in

moral reflection, enabling them to interpret knowledge in ways that connect with a

narrative or story that holds knowledge together within a meaningful social-cultural

infrastructure (Postman, 1995; Wishard, 1994). In the absence of that, we risk a crisis of

meaning that threatens not only education, but all social institutions as they deconstruct into nihilism and the atomism of utilitarian individualism.

Perspectives from Civic, Moral, and Character Education

Most efforts to accomplish this in schools have traditionally fallen under the rubrics of moral education, character education, and civic education. The latter has had more formal stature within the normal school curriculum. A sampling of goals of school-based civic education include the following: to motivate students and enable them to play their part as informed, responsible, committed and effective members of a modern democratic political system (Butts, 1980); to promote learning and instruction for the development of citizen competence (Remy, 1980); and to develop citizens who choose to act reasonably, intelligently and creatively while manifesting a sense of fairness, obligation and duty to others (Pratte, 1988). For Barber (1984, 1989), the aim of civic education is realized to the degree that students take their place as participating adults in a pluralistic democracy, capable of making judgments that lead to rational choice. Yet, the problem he presents is precisely at the core of the communitarian agenda that seeks to reconcile the liberal and civic republican traditions. That challenge is one of keeping citizen-learners responsible for the whole community, while leaving them free and to aspire to their own personal goals. It is demonstrative of the interplay between Etzioni's (1996) two primary core values of autonomy and respect for the social order.

But there is significant research that calls into question the effectiveness of school-based civic education in secondary and higher education. Janowitz (1983) reports that undergraduates in higher education demonstrate lower ratings for citizenship responsibilities and obligations than for citizen rights. The concept of a good citizen has become increasingly individualistic, not civic. Many are committed to an individualistic logic asserted in categories of autonomy, independence, getting ahead, and keeping ahead of others, regardless of the cost in human suffering, to the point of ignoring any

concept that values the public good (Pratte, 1988, p. 16). Consequently, there is little evidence of a shift to the development of what Barber (1984) refers to as "we thinkers." Knowledge of political processes and civic participation are in strong decline among college students (Sax, Astin, Korn, & Mahoney, 1997). There is ample evidence that formal school civic education programs do not translate into participation in adult life (Ferguson, 1991) and that few Americans believe such programs have a lasting impact later in life (Pearson, O'Neal, Salganik, & McMillen, 1997).

Unfortunately, most research in the area of civic education has been limited to quantitative studies exploring the correlation between high school and college level social studies education and their relationship to later civic participation. Ferguson (1991) points out that most research of that kind is based on traditional political science theory constrained by a limited definition of civic participation behaviors. What often are not factored are the expressions of participation manifested in other dimensions of citizenship including membership in local community organizations, charitable activities, non-profit groups, and issue-oriented advocacy initiatives.

What much of the existing research fails to consider are the less formal and more open-ended kinds of civic participation that demonstrate involvement with one's community. These informal modes of participation represent myriad opportunities for meaningful conversation, dialogue, reflection, and analysis surrounding social-political issues. Such conversation generally precedes more formal and direct citizen participation activities like voting or writing a letter to one's congressional representative. These informal modes of participation are fundamentally communicative and dialogic, and inform public opinion (Yankelovich, 1988, 1991). They constitute the domain of public moral discourse that occurs in civil society as issues percolate among the citizenry.

Ferguson (1991) goes on to argue that civic participation is far more complex, multi-dimensional and contextually based behavior than previous research has suggested. He postures the need for a new approach that improves the theory of civic participation by promoting research about the why of it, rather than the what of it. He specifically argues the need for innovative qualitative approaches utilizing case studies, ethnographic, observational and interview methods to better understand the attributes and behaviors of adult citizens. That will require research that studies civic education outside traditional classroom situations and brings the research into the context of daily living and the larger community.

Given the failure of traditional approaches, educators like Butts (1980), Pratte (1988), and Newman (1989) call for innovation in school curriculum. Likewise, communitarian political theorists and proponents of participatory democracy point to the need for change in curriculum and methods of school-based civic education. Ironically, education in public schools often promotes a private education by advancing individualism (Giarelli & Giarelli, 1996). Traditional approaches tend to focus on intellectual skills by teaching civic facts, while minimizing the importance of civic dispositions and values. The result is an impoverished and overly individualistic perspective that equates civic action with political action motivated by self interests. This approach places primordial emphasis on advocacy skills and knowing how to work the system of the procedural republic in order to advocate one's own interests and pre-dispositions (Finkelstein, 1985). Rather than just enhance students' learning potential to advance their own self-fulfillment, learning potential should also promote habits of the heart that engender commitment and solidarity to the community and an appreciation for deliberation and consensus building (Theobold & Dinkelman, 1995). This necessitates the promotion of a social ethic of "willing action" (Pratte, 1988) that is beneficial to the needs of others by creating in schools an "embryonic community life" (Dewey, 1916).

Reform initiatives in school based civic education are a recurring theme among communitarians who emphasize the need to promote the school environment as a primary support to family life in the task of forming values and character in young people (Communitarian Network, 1997). Value formation is not the sole province of families. The notion of value-free education is confronted as sorely mistaken (Gutmann, 1999). More than cognitive knowledge about values, students should be encouraged to internalize core values like self discipline and empathy (Etzioni, 1998). Related school policy initiatives that nurture civic virtue and civic involvement include mandatory community service programs (Barber, 1991) as well as the advancement of full-service community schools that offer extended learning opportunities meeting diverse needs within the community.

Much of the call for change in civic education points to a critical need to address the formation of civic values. Those values constitute the necessary dispositions that motivate participation in civic matters. Civic education demands more than a knowledge of public affairs and systems of government. It demands that we nurture among the citizenry a sense of belonging, a concern for the whole, a moral bond with the community whose fate is at stake. To do that will require that citizens possess or come to acquire civic virtue. Liberty cannot survive without virtue; but, virtuous citizens are made, not born.

Civic virtue is not just a matter of behavior. It is about forming a disposition that is willing to act on behalf of the public good while being attentive to and considerate of the feelings, needs, and attitudes of others. It evokes a sense of duty or obligation to be fair with others, to be kind and respectful, and to be of service to the community (Pratte, 1988). Civic virtue comprises certain habits of mind and heart that inform the democratic ethos. As Toqueville pointed out, if these habits are to be sustained in society, they are not simply inherited; rather, each new generation is a new people that must acquire the

knowledge, learn the skills, and develop the dispositions or traits of private and public character that undergird a constitutional democracy. Those dispositions must be diligently nurtured and fostered by word, study and example. Democracy must be purposefully reproduced, from one generation to the next (Branson & Quigley, 1998). Our social institutions function as the intermediate structures that provide the context where that happens. Families, neighborhoods, schools, community groups and churches are the seedbeds of virtue (Glendon & Blackenhorn, 1995). In the tradition of Mann and Dewey, schools have particularly served this function in American democracy, and they are rightly the focus of renewed efforts in values-based education.

Education's role in the formation of civic values brings to the foreground a contrast between moral education and character education. The two go hand in hand but are distinct. Moral education is process oriented in that its purpose is to equip students with skills in moral reasoning. Its aim is to develop in students the values on which they can make moral judgments, but with no implication regarding the particular moral goodness of those judgments in their social context. Traditional approaches to moral education are represented in the writings of Durkheim and Dewey, though the two are quite different. Durkheim's (1904) approach is grounded in Kantian rationalism with centrality placed on rules, obligation and discipline, whereas Dewey's (1969) consequentialist approach emphasizes the specific contexts of life experience. Yet, both attempt to balance a commitment to the social group with a value for personal autonomy.

Gutmann (1999) identifies several approaches to moral education that schools have taken, all of which have shortcomings that diminish a communitarian social ethic that affirms the common good. She cites two approaches, in particular, that have been evident in schooling: values clarification, rooted in liberal neutrality, stresses students' freedom to choose their own values; the other is demonstrated in theories of moral

development (Kohlberg, 1969a; 1976; Mosher, 1980; Rest, 1979, 1986). Gutmann is critical of both approaches and sees them as highly individualistic because they place priority on personal choice and commitment to a morality of principle rather than a morality of association. Values clarification is not moral discourse because it is not truly dialogical and does not call forth consensus through true moral interaction (Oser, 1986). Its claims are made on an individual level without the rigor of rational claims to legitimacy. A morality of association would need to reflect a more communitarian approach and would see moral education not in terms of stages of individual development, but rather as an ongoing dialogic interface with one's constitutive communities.

This contrast between an individualist and communitarian approach to civic virtue is evident elsewhere. According to the National Standards for Civics and Government (Bahmueller, 1995), there is a conflict in our orientation toward civic values in America, and this conflict is symptomatic of the tension that exists between classical liberalism and civic republicanism. On one hand, liberalism takes an approach to civic values that emphasizes the protection of individual rights and makes this the central purpose of government; on the other, civic republicanism emphasizes the primacy of civic virtue and the common good. Civic values can thus be viewed as private or public (Branson & Quigley, 1998). One can then infer that private civic values are rooted in individual virtue, whereas public civic values have their roots in a more public civic virtue.

Communitarians argue for a need to shift from a focus on making decisions grounded in private values to one that is rooted in public values, what Rousseau (1762/1950) would call the "general will." When private values are divorced from their social contract, they become fundamentally amoral and hold no expectation of goodness unto themselves. Genuine character education calls for transcending private values and engaging public values. Those values are moral as they are fundamentally social in their

context. If character education is about nurturing good values, its must be about nurturing civic virtue among its citizens. Genuine character education is thus education to act virtuously in community (Branson & Quigley, 1998). It seeks to get to matters of interiority and disposition vis-à-vis one's relationship with the larger community.

Some of the more vocal enthusiasts of contemporary character education practice a "pedagogy of imposition" (Kelle, 1996) that assumes a narrowly individualistic and privatized approach to values and virtue with an aim to inculcate character that "counts" as if it is a fixed, externalized human condition apart from social context (Josephson, 1996). The inference is that virtue is a deposit of quantifiable and absolute dispositions of character that serve as the bank of moral principles from which individuals draw as they exercise free choice. What is lacking in such approaches is an understanding of character that is social, interactive, dialogic and fluid. The values that are emphasized in the former approach are often limited to personal self-development that emphasizes individualism, economic success, status quo patriotism and personal integrity. These typically include being an independent and economically self sufficient member of society and fulfilling the minimalist civic responsibilities prescribed by law and constitutional rights, such as paying taxes, voting, and taking one's turn on jury duty.

Such approaches, however, often fail to give just due to the more "public" civic virtues that promote civility in dialogue, critical thinking, and willingness to listen and negotiate with fellow citizens. Though traditional character education programs may promote respect for the dignity of others, the emphasis is on standing the ground of one's own commitments as a matter of principle and conscience, with minimal focus on efforts to dialogue with others in pursuit of the common ground that can illuminate alternative solutions to complex moral dilemmas. Moral right yields moral absolute and the arrogance of a "morality of principle" (Gutmann, 1999) that becomes sanctimonious in the name of personal integrity.

To the contrary, civic virtue and morality are social constructs that imply public moral action within a community context (Covaleskie, 1996). Moral educators grounded in a communitarian worldview underscore this retrieval of Aristotelian ethics as advanced by the writings of MacIntyre (1984). Virtues are always relational and are linked with the community. But to make prudential judgments on the basis of the possible evidence as perceived by our socially negotiated construction of reality is not to resort to moral relativism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Kuhn, 1970). We can define moral standards and make judgments for the good of society. Aristotle (trans.1985) saw this as the virtue of phronesis and believed it was an essential element of responsible civic participation . It is a capacity to exercise practical wisdom as one acts with flexibility and interfaces with one's environment. One is able to do the right thing at the right time in the right way for the right reason. But it is not sufficient to merely act virtuously; one must be virtuous through an internalized construction of value dispositions that sustain the moral construction of the good society (Covaleskie, 1996). This is a function of education, even if it imposes some limitation on personal freedom. Freedom is a means, not an end in itself, and education exists to limit this freedom and to direct it toward good ends (Covaleskie, 1996).

Virtues are points on a moral compass that provide criteria with which the community can assess its standards and mores. Because virtues lay outside the rational domain of logic and techne, moral discourse must legitimate dialogue that includes the free exchange of values, feelings, dispositions and inclinations. To act virtuously is to act from an inclination formed by the cultivation of virtue. MacIntyre sees this as central to the task of moral education as it forms the value base needed for moral action. Those values, he postures, are influenced by the virtues that impact our feelings and sentiment. This appeal to sentiment is not the emotivism that MacIntyre sees as the root cause of liberalism's dysfunction and the collapse of moral language. Moral judgment, he argues,

is not a matter of mere personal preference. It has teleological import, demonstrating a

purposefulness in human existence beyond individual self-aggrandizement. It is rooted

in one's sense of right and wrong and is developed in the context of one's relationship

with the community, such that every moral action impacts the community, either building

it up or tearing it down. Thus, all moral actions have a social context. It is insufficient for

moral action to be based solely on personal preference or individual principle, as noble

as the latter might appear. Fidelity to principle requires a fidelity to the situation as much

as to a compelling ideal (Selznick, 1995). The interests of community are not well served

by an a-contextual, absolutist, rights-centered liberalism. Moral action must reflect a

wholeness and integrity that demonstrates one's connectedness with the community in

history and one's obligation to uphold the common good (Carter, 1996).

<u>Perspectives from Adult Education</u>

As the focus of my research question concerns adults, it is particularly

appropriate to investigate the literature that directly bears on adult education and its

relationship to civic education. The history and practice of adult education demonstrates

a range of diverse goals including self improvement, personal growth, liberal education,

occupational training, human resource development, and social change through

promotion of democracy (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). It is this last goal that engages

the dynamics of adult civic education and that I wish to emphasize and link with the

practice of transformational leadership and the formation of a communitarian approach

to civic virtue. This goal views adult education as an "agitating instrumentality for

changing life" (Lindeman, 1926). If leadership is about affecting change in organizations,

adult education is a means to that end. The two are entwined.

Though civic education has long been a foundational goal of adult education, its

focus in recent years has shifted more to job literacy (Boggs, 1991b; Miller, 1995). The

change has substantially reduced adult education's impact on citizenship and political

responsibility. Adult education has largely forsaken its original mission to prepare adult citizens for active participation in democracy. This is evidenced in the paucity of research on the relationship between adult education and civic involvement. The literature is more of a theoretical nature, drawing substantially from the development of critical thinking (Brookfield, 1987), transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991), emancipatory learning (Boggs, 1991b; Freire, 1972, 1973; Miller, 1995) and Habermasian Critical Theory (Welton, 1993).

Boggs (1991b) represents the only substantial work in recent years that specifically attempts to retrieve the lost civic purpose of adult education. There is no mention of adult civic education in the National Standards for Civics and Government nor in the Goals 2000 agenda (Branson & Quigley, 1998). Merriam and Caffarelli's (1999) comprehensive review of adult education theory and practice gives scant mention of civic education, and no citation at all to Boggs in their list of over 900 references. The authors candidly conclude that the political reality of adult education is driven by a status quo approach to politics, despite lofty ideals that see adult education as an instrument for social change. Today's emphasis of adult education, they acknowledge, is driven by values of individuality, independence and entrepreneurialism. This explains the focus on human resource development and training, continued emphasis on basic skills acquisition, and expanding continuing education programs driven by new technologies that have brought on distance learning and online courses. Despite the promises of transformational educational theory, its chief advocate, Mezirow, bemoans "the drift of the field of adult education from its original concern as an enterprise driven by social ideals to one overwhelmingly market driven" (cited in Boggs, 1991b, p. 17). Boggs sees the tragic consequence of the shift and views it as a betrayal of the very roots of adult education. It fails in its primary responsibility to form citizens to participate in democracy.

Boggs defines adult civic education as "the purposeful and systematic effort to develop in adults the skills and dispositions to function effectively as citizens in their communities as well as in the larger world" (Boggs, 1992, p. 5). He sees the formation of civic values as the central problem for adult civic education. Civic values inform moral reasoning and are a means for citizens to examine and prioritize what matters most to a community in its changing political environment. Civic virtue has the capacity to inform that moral reasoning by putting the concerns of the community and the public good over personal self interest (Boggs, 1992). Adult civic education must confront the individualism that thwarts a commitment to the commonwealth.

In developing his methodology, Boggs considers what information, knowledge, dispositions and actions are required of citizens in order to attend to the public's business in the practice of democratic citizenship. He offers a three-fold approach. Adult civic education should: (1) deal with information and be issue-oriented and content specific; (2) engage values by facilitating moral reasoning and judgment that underscores the public good; and (3) call forth responsible action within spheres of democratic systems in local, national and global arenas. His approach, though similar to the National Standards for Civics and Government, expands the latter's notion of participatory skills to include overt action for political and social change that sustains the good of the community. This action component is the ultimate objective of civic education. Like Rost's (1995) definition of transformational leadership, Bogg's model for adult civic education requires participants who intend real change. Though the intended action may not be successful, the process is nonetheless motivated and directed toward organizational, institutional and social transformation.

Bogg's analysis underscores the vacuum and the need for new approaches. But where can adult civic education take place? What are its venues? There is little innovation in the literature. Even Boggs seems to limit the context of adult civic

education to formal programs carried on by traditional educational institutions like community colleges, school districts, community continuing education outreaches, and state humanities councils. Few have seen the opportunities for adult civic education in the activities of local groups that comprise civil society, e.g., the workplace, church, and community civic groups (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). My own pilot study on a voluntary citizen's group convinces me that alternative venues for adult civic education are possible (Frank, 1999). With Tocqueville, I am suggesting that such venues hold promise of being fertile soil that can rekindle civic virtue among the citizenry. They can do so because they provide space for the moral conversation to ensue.

The challenge to adult educators is to infuse an understanding of citizen responsibility in all adult learning contexts, whether they be professional development programs, vocational education, or adult basic education (Boggs, 1991b). The process requires an understanding of the changing political environment and requires engagement with it. Action and doing are central to the learning process. The doing, in turn, leads back to the learning, which leads to increased empowerment and participation. But Boggs is more a practitioner than a theoretician. He draws little from Critical Theory and theories of transformative learning. We need to draw from those waters to move the question forward.

Adult Development as Critical Pedagogy

The shift from adult education to critical pedagogy is a natural one, evidenced in a growing body of literature on the relationship between the two (Davison, 1989; Falk, 1995). Adult education employs Critical Theory through "ideological detoxification" (Brookfield, 1987), "education for critical consciousness" (Freire, 1973), and "perspective transformation" (Mezirow, 1991). Adult education begins with the learner's reality and covers situations, not subjects (Lindeman, 1926), so that learners can reflect critically on their experiences and the experience of others, and then act to effect change. Adult

education as critical thinking is ethically oriented (Heaney, 1984), as it is concerned with making the world good through action, and that translates into morality and behavior. Adult education presents the means for critical thinkers to determine what is good because adults can build the world they want through their control of experience.

Even before the emergence of the information age, Dewey believed that individuals in modern society increasingly find themselves in a grip of immense forces that they cannot control nor understand as new technologies lead to concentration of capital in large corporations, the interdependence of government and industry, and the power of the media. The danger is the risk of succumbing to a "pseudo-democracy" (Fishkin, 1991) based in "pseudo-public opinion" (Dewey, 1988b) resulting in a public that is "lost and bewildered" (Dewey, 1984). The social forces of industrial society, the loss of a community, and the quest for an integrative story with symbols that communicate shared meaning motivate a concern for resolving the "problem of the public." What is needed is something akin to Dewey's challenge to construct a great community through methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion that shape collective social intelligence though processes of cooperative action.

A critical pedagogical approach to adult development can help create that community as it yields a qualitative change in how adults view their world (Hobson & Welbourne, 1998). The process involves the formation of a new consciousness as meaning is reconstructed through learning that works through contradictions. To make meaning is to construe or interpret experience (Mezirow, 1991), and the key is dialogue. The process is not one of going through fixed stages of development, but rather through a learning process that is fundamentally dialectical and contextualist (Hobson & Welbourne, 1998). The old and the new are continually integrated. Life is not a static reality, but in flux as learning develops through a continual process moving through contradictions, into resolution, and then into new contradictions that must be resolved,

again and again. This kind of learning is fundamentally communicative, interactive and dialogical and is negotiated in critical discourse where meaning is contested, confirmed and reconstructed. It accommodates the past but aims toward the future, employing an educative model connecting theory with practice and equipping learners with knowledge to change themselves (Fay, 1977) .

But given that most empirical studies on moral development and civic education have centered on children, it is not surprising that there is little in the research literature interfacing theories of adult critical learning with efforts to advance civic education and participatory democracy. Yet, the linkage is appropriate and needs to be explored in the theoretical literature. Theories of adult development that draw from critical pedagogy typically see it as a means to affect transformational learning that contributes to and shapes the development of participatory democracy (Kelle, 1996). Transformative learning is fundamentally political, imbued with values, and has an ideological orientation that embraces the values of a liberated citizenry empowered to function within a participatory democracy. Critical pedagogy is the pathway to social change as individuals' mindsets are changed. As those individuals participate in democracy, so does society change. One qualitative study (Scott, 1991) interviewed leaders of a community-based coalition to assess what leaders learned and to what extent their views of reality were transformed as a result of their participation. Scott used Freire's action-reflection method to unpack how participation and dialogue exposed false perceptions and validated the group's collective perspective of justice. The study showed that involvement in social change requires one to confront unexamined assumptions and that group dialogue and reflection after action in the public arena were means to attaining alternative viewpoints and meaning perspectives.

Several theories of adult critical pedagogy highlight the contemporary literature. Most methods in some way draw from the foundational work of Freire (1972, 1973). His

approach is emancipatory learning, where the context is generally illiteracy co-existing with poverty, oppression or other forms of social injustice. Education is never neutral; it either domesticates by affirming values that sustain the status quo and the dominant group, or it liberates through a praxis involving the dialectic between action and reflection, leading to conscientization and social change. Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformational learning builds on the work of Freire. Transformative learning is concerned with how adults interpret their life experience and how they make meaning through that process. It employs perspective transformation as the means to become critically aware of how and why presuppositions strain the way we perceive and feel about the world. Assumptions are reformulated in a way that opens adults to a more inclusive and integrative perspective that makes sense out of disorienting dilemmas or experiences that cannot otherwise be resolved using old ways of thinking. The aim of perspective transformation is to draw connections between one's own life experience and the collective experience of others and thereby come to a new understanding of one's relationship with society (Mezirow, 1991). It validates new insight and empowers participants to take appropriate action. Still another method is reflected in Brookfield's (1987, 1991) practice of critical thinking. Again, the approach is constructivist as an experience triggers discomfort and confusion and leads to the exploration of alternatives which are subsequently integrated into the fabric of one's life.

In more recent years, the literature increasingly points to the influence of Critical Theory, particularly in the context of the theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1984). From that standpoint, adult development comes about through engagement in ideal conditions of meaningful discourse. These conditions require comprehensibility, truthfulness, legitimacy and sincerity. Welton (1993) suggests that these criteria are also the ideal conditions for adult learning. Other factors include the need for open public space, clear communication, and a discourse venue that draws from what Habermas

calls the lifeworld, in contrast to the systems of the state and market. The lifeworld is the locus of moral-practical knowledge in the context of genuine "relations of meaning" that are shared in families, the workplace, and in political actions and civic discourse. The lifeworld is formed through cultural tradition, social integration and processes of socialization. Those processes unfold through expressions of communicative action that construct individual and social meaning (Love, 1995).

Welton (1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c) has written extensively about the contribution that Habermas and Critical Theory have made in developments in adult education. Critical Theory approaches discourse from a power relations framework, identifying systems of oppression as a lens through which to analyze society. It assumes that human beings can move beyond passivity through rational discourse to bring about a more just society. Its aims are empowerment and emancipation, enabling people to change themselves through rational discourse by employing an educative model rather than an instrumentalist model that functionally serves a preconceived end driven by self-interest (Fay, 1977). Critical Theory allows people to understand their true needs by using technical knowledge in a way that genuinely improves society. Change comes about through the integration of technical, practical and emancipatory knowledge (Welton, 1993).

Some management writers have attempted to integrate Critical Theory in the workplace, but only to the extent of empowering employees within the unquestioned ends of the organization's pre-ordained mission (Dew, 1997). Reminiscent of Rost's (1991) critique regarding the co-optation of Burns' notion of transformational leadership, such misapplications of Critical Theory dilute the deeper implications of emancipatory education, reducing it to a rubric serving the traditional industrial paradigm and the aims of managerial productivity, while forsaking the civic obligation that serves the common good in the larger community. These approaches fall short of the deeper transformation

that comes through genuine emancipation. This inadequacy also calls to mind the criticism regarding limited theories of leadership ethics that are preoccupied with professional ethics and processes, while avoiding the more substantive concerns related to the ethical content (Rost, 1995).

To recap this section of my literature review on education and democracy, a good society requires virtuous citizens. In order to maintain vibrant democracy from one generation to the next, citizens need to be educated to develop the dispositions and civic virtue that sustain commitment and participation within the commonwealth. This is the formative challenge of democracy and the highest goal of politics -- to foster moral communities that can sustain the common life of the citizenry. It is also the primary aim of education in a democratic society and has largely functioned in the constrained context of school-based civic education curriculum. But in recent decades, schools have shifted to increasingly technical and cognitive approaches to knowledge that serve market-driven needs, while demonstrating less focus on moral and affective dimensions of educational content that enhance civic values. Studies show that traditional K-12 civic education programs fall short of the challenge, having little impact on civic participation in adult life. Student perceptions of citizenship are increasingly individualistic and rights-centered, with diminished appreciation for civic values that motivate involvement in community concerns. The research is limited by quantitative designs with narrow definitions of civic participation, largely ignoring the more complex, contextual, and informal modes of civic involvement by concerned citizens who engage in substantive discourse. Research needs to broaden dimensions of civic participation by employing qualitative methods.

Other aspects of education's formative challenge in nurturing democracy are evident in the literature on moral education and character development. These

approaches are also typically individualistic and emphasize personal responsibility and private value systems. A communitarian approach is called for that shifts the emphasis to the formation of public civic values including a willingness and capacity to engage with others in moral discourse where values and dispositions have a legitimate place in the dialogue.

Finally, the literature on adult education and critical pedagogy is particularly relevant to the central question of this study. Theories of adult education and critical pedagogy rely heavily on dialogic modes of learning that construct meaning within the context of lived experience. Together with transformational leadership and communitarian politics, they converge in the practice of moral discourse. And to that final component of my review, I now turn.

The Search for Method in Public Moral Conversation

If civil society is to exercise its function to safeguard the common good in democracy, civic discourse must advance to a deeper level of moral discourse, to what Etzioni (1996) calls a "dialogue of conviction." This will require more than a utilitarian capacity to choose one's own ends while respecting others' rights. Instead, it will require social processes that go beyond self interest and shape adult moral commitment to community values. Moral discourse becomes the means to do that by articulating the shared values that serve as the foundation for identifying the common ground of the community's common good. In so doing, the process of participation in the moral conversation motivates voluntary compliance to the shared values that define the community's social order (Etzioni, 1991). Moral discourse not only defines the community's mores, but participation in it constructs the community by building trust and solidarity (Wuthnow, 1998).

The mores of the communities that comprise civil society give shape to the

character and virtue of society's citizens. What ultimately distinguishes a community as a

group is its capacity to reflect morally and to attain some consensus about what

constitutes the good (Bellah, 1995). Moral discourse is the defining function that does

that, and in so doing, it establishes the community's identity. But it is in sorry lack in

contemporary American culture. To resolve that problem, Bellah calls for the injection of

"conversations that matter" into civic discourse, and those conversations need to have

moral import (Bellah et al., 1991). But how can that be done? The search for method

gets to the heart of the educational challenge that underlies the significance of this

study. I conclude my review of the literature by considering the research and theoretical

literature more specific to moral discourse, in search of a deeper understanding of its

meaning as well as an attempt to extract methods and approaches to its practice.

<u>Early Developments</u>

Gouinlock (1986) traces the earliest evidence of moral discourse theory to John

Stuart Mill (1859/1989) who saw it as a fundamentally communicative process with little

precedent in the history of philosophy. The idea reappears in the early 20th century with

Dewey's method of social intelligence where moral discourse presumes a context of

moral pluralism within changing historical circumstances and processes that are

communicative and experiential, continually expansive and changing. Dewey's method

"is moral pluralism become intelligent and respectful of itself" (Gouinlock, 1986, p. 67).

The approach is not based on abstract moral theories, but on the practical urgency

posed by the context of real life problems, needs and circumstances. The active

participation of all is assured in face to face dialogue that is honest, caring and empathic.

All sides are heard fully and impartially as reservations and criticism is exchanged. As

mutual respect builds, there is a gradual shift in thinking such that previously unknown

alternatives begin to surface. Those ideas are evaluated, rejected and revised until the

possibility for concerted action finally emerges. The process assumes a willingness to hold belief in suspense, to doubt until evidence is obtained, and to go where the evidence points regardless of one's predispositions. As new insight unfolds and shared meaning develops, knowledge is reconstructed and social intelligence expands.

For Dewey, moral discourse is intimately linked with the task of community building and the development of democracy. But apart from a recent re-emergence of Dewey's methods in contemporary communitarian thought, his ideas were for the most part discarded in favor of a return to classical rationalist ethics that do not readily admit to the validity for moral pluralism. Rather, such approaches posture externalized apriori positions that frame absolute moral systems. Neither Rawls (1971), Nozick (1974), Kohlberg (1969a) or MacIntyre (1984) have a place for Dewey's method of social intelligence which sees knowledge as expanding and changing through the context of life experience and the communicative processes that give meaning to that experience.

Moral Discourse in School-Based Moral Education

Although there is little research on public moral discourse, a fruitful source of corollary data can be gleaned from the more extensive studies on moral discourse in classroom situations. Moral discourse is the common denominator in most approaches to moral education (Berkowitz & Oser, 1985; Kohlberg, 1976; Oser, 1976; Rest, 1979). These approaches typically use some form of dialogue or discussion to engage student reflectivity on real or contrived moral dilemmas. Oser (1986) reviews the literature on how moral discourse is used in moral education in school contexts, particularly secondary education. His analysis is based on applying moral discourse to Kohlberg's cognitive developmental approach to moral education, and builds on the findings of Blatt and Kohlberg (1975) who demonstrated that teachers can in fact stimulate higher stages of moral development. Oser concludes that teachers should direct discourse to moral conflict situations in order to stimulate growth toward higher levels of moral judgment.

The teacher-leader seeks the appropriate moral educational situation and acts to engage constituents in a non-threatening manner, by asking the right question and posing the moral problem which heretofore may have been ignored or not acknowledged.

As Oser's method assesses how teachers can be agents of moral discourse, it is likely to be applicable to leaders in adult settings as well. He constructs a general framework of moral education and places discourse at the center of the process. It is the common denominator that applies to all moral learning in the school setting and aims to stimulate higher stages of moral development. In doing so, Oser proposes that development, not moral content or values education per se, should be the aim of education. He considers moral discourse in the context of Habermas' theory of communicative action, but uses the strategic context of moral development theory (Kohlberg, 1969a, 1976) in pursuit of constructing the ideal "just community" in the school setting (Kohlberg, 1985). In doing so, he identifies several elements of moral discourse in the teaching process: (1) discourse should stimulate recursive thinking through moral role taking and empathy with the needs and feelings of others; (2) the discourse should lead to making relevant decisions that result in appropriate moral action; (3) the discourse should be directed to forming shared norms that give shape to a moral climate within the school community; and (4) the discourse should stimulate meta-reflection oriented toward one's own moral growth and self improvement. Oser concludes that we need to train educators in discourse pedagogy that balances personal morality, which he calls the moral sense, with societal morality which is the domain of moral consensus. He concludes by that there is need for more research that studies the quality of discourse in classrooms. The school setting is fundamentally a moral enterprise, but so is all social and political life. What we learn from moral discourse in

formal approaches in schools is transferable to the larger social and political life of

adulthood.

Other approaches to moral discourse in the classroom are less theoretical and

more practical. Rossi (1995) describes the importance of an appropriate classroom

climate that can enhance moral dialogue on controversial issues. To avoid inflammatory

conflict, teachers should promote a cooperative context so that students perceive that

they can attain their goal only if others can obtain their goals as well (Barber, 1989). The

teacher must assure that adequate information on the subject matter is readily available

and appropriately entered into the content of the dialogue. Students need to openly

consider the perspective of others to understand how a problem or situation appears

cognitively and affectively to another person. They need to be able to disagree while still

confirming and without affronting another's personal competence. To make the

discourse more inclusive, participation can be increased by first engaging students in

efforts to identify norms and classroom dynamics that inhibit discussion (Lusk &

Weinberg, 1994).

But these approaches emphasize processes of moral reasoning and values

clarification with little regard to the moral goodness of the judgments that are concluded.

For the most part, they are oriented to individual moral development and presume that

the primary categories of morality are personal choice, freedom, and individual

conscience, with little regard to an obligation to sustain the good of the community. So

formulated, moral discourse serves the functions of individual conscience, with little aim

to define community identification, common ground or common good. The aim is

generally values clarification that does not induce a search for consensus and does not

bring to bear the power of true moral interaction (Oser, 1986). There is an absence of a

will to generate a common solution, an avoidance of claims to truth and rightness, and a

failure to distinguish between morality as generalizable systems of normative behavior

versus private aesthetic taste. Such factors demonstrate the pervasive accommodation of the liberal principles of autonomy and neutrality that short-circuit the moral discourse in the public sphere. There is an avoidance of any legitimacy to communal value systems, for fear that they might elicit moral obligation to a good beyond one's own individual perception of the good. Yet, some have called for schools to abandon the myth of neutrality and embrace their responsibility to be forums for genuine moral discourse that rekindles personal commitment to compassion and the common good (Koetting, 1998).

<u>Communitarian Approaches to Moral Discourse</u>

As helpful as these approaches in school settings may be, they are not applicable in the context of adults citizens engaged in moral discourse within organizational or civic settings. They maintain focus on individual moral development and fail to consider how group's make moral decisions. Yet, collective moral decision making is an essential element to the process of transformational leadership (Rost, 1995). A brief consideration of communitarian perspectives can help to fill the gap.

Public moral discourse lies at the heart of the communitarian agenda to remoralize society. Etzioni and others have called for meaningful dialogue at all levels of American society to shape a social ethic that balances personal rights and responsibility to the community. But, he also admits to a lack of proven models for doing moral discourse within communities (Etzioni, 1996). Still, there is a significant theoretical base for models of moral conversation within the communitarian literature, drawing substantially from Critical Theory and discourse ethics as well as popular prescriptions that promote values-based conversations (Tannen, 1998; Yankelovich, 1999). Barber (1989) advocates conditions for "public talk" that include the ability to listen with understanding, being able to express oneself in both affective as well as cognitive modes of expression, an intentionality that is imbued with a commitment to action ,and

an openness to affecting real change. Public talk is enhanced when it happens among a group that not only intends change, but is empowered to make the change happen.

Yankelovich (1991) presents a three-step process of consciousness-raising, working through, and resolution. Sandel (1996) calls for civic discourse to go beyond matters of expertise and utilitarian efficiency that are preoccupied with means and avoid ends. Selznick (1992) sees a need to break free of a "logic of domination" where ends are given and predefined and goals are set on non-technical grounds that lay beyond rational questioning. Selznick's methodology builds upon a retrieval of Dewey's naturalist approach by appealing to a "covenant of reason" anchored in experience and the order of the real world. He calls us beyond personal ideals and individual principles that can enslave, constrict and inhibit dialogue, thereby limiting personal and community development. When principles are invoked, they should not be self-serving, but rather illustrative of the ultimate goals that sustain community. For Selznick, moral discourse is practical to particular situations. It aims not to follow rules, but to do justice while being sensitive to the reasons behind the rules. The process opens minds, enlarges horizons and overcomes parochial thinking.

Other communitarian theorists see a need to legitimate religious and spiritual categories in public discourse (Carter, 1996; Douglass & Hollenbach, 1994; Neuhaus, 1984; Tracy, 1994). They argue that religion is essential to the history of American public philosophy (Guiness, 1994) and that the intent to separate church and state is not to remove moral conversation from the political process. Religious experience is typically imbued with values that shape one's orientation to shared life in the community. If the religious sentiment of citizens is denied access to the public arena, it can be co-opted or disguised under the rubric of civil religion based in the liberal state's values of individual rights, liberty and equality (Wilson, 1995). Yet, Etzioni (1996) tends to downplay the essential role of religion in forming civic virtue, citing the often conflictual role of religion

in civil unrest. He concludes that religion, though it may be the source of virtue for many, does not guarantee it. A communitarian commitment to core values can be rooted in an ethical system that draws from either secular social ethics or religious ethical systems, so long as people can come to balance their ethical commitments with respect for the autonomy of the individual. Tracy (1994) argues that religion should be represented in the discourse, so long as believers honor the demands of intellectual solidarity by genuinely listening and, if necessary, changing their position as a result of what they have learned.

Discourse Ethics

I now bring to the discussion the rich contribution from discourse ethics as it develops from my earlier consideration of Habermas and Critical Theory. Discourse ethics presents a guiding framework for developing a method for doing moral conversation. Based in Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas, 1984, 1990a, 1990c), discourse ethics is an ethics of language that relies on the insight gained through the participation process itself. Such exchanges are not isolated thought experiments based in the preconceived moral dispositions of individual participants (Kant, 1938). Instead, they are concrete intersubjective engagements on real situations that emanate from the lifeworld and surface insight other than that which any individual reflecting alone might presuppose (Benhabib, 1989).

So used, discourse ethics represents an anti-positivist and postmodern approach to morality that holds that the cognitive rationality of ethical principles does not simply coincide with knowledge of facts and apriori norms of justice and fairness (Rawls, 1971). The central premise is that norms and normative institutional arrangements are valid or legitimized only to the extent that individuals can freely consent to them as a result of their participation in certain dialogical practices (Benhabib & Dallmayr, 1990). The process yields justifiable ethical insight to the extent the discourse process reflects the

normative structure of an "ideal speech community." Its practice needs to assure comprehensibility, truthfulness, legitimacy and sincerity. Further, the discourse reflects both symmetry and reciprocity (Aragaki, 1993). Each participant is positioned symmetrically with respect to others, such that each possesses equal access to initiate and continue the discussion. Reciprocity demands that each participant respect the equal distribution of rights in the discourse and behave in ways that assure that untruthfulness, duplicity, inequality and subordination do not occur.

From the standpoint of the communicative action that underlies discourse ethics, true dialogue is moral conversation and is the only means to attain universalizability. But instead of employing the silent and self-willed thought experiment of Kant's categorical imperative or Rawls apriori original position, an alternative moral imperative is postured as the means to attain a universal maxim. Benhabib and Dallmayr (1990) suggest that this imperative can be defined as acting in conformity with those maxims and those maxims only that reflect those norms or institutions that the participants of an ideal communication community agree to as representing their common interests, and only after engaging in a special kind of argumentation framed by the rigor of the ideal speech situation. In so doing, Habermas' discourse ethics evokes something of a communitarian moral imperative that serves the need for normative ethics (Etzioni, 1996). It is a means to gain insight about normative behavior that respects both society's moral order as well as individual autonomy.

As a dialogic ethic, communicative action strives to function relative to the historical context and the specificity of particular circumstances. Rather than posturing the prescription of a Kantian rule ethic, its approach to moral theory is naturalistic in the experiential sense and externalized in practice. More reflective of a communitarian and consequentialist approach, discourse ethics is not driven by a duty to obey rules. Instead, it strives to respond to the nature of actual circumstances and demands that the

community finds placed upon itself. Those demands do not proceed from abstract rules nor absolute ideals, however awe-inspiring they may be. Instead, the process is propelled by concrete relations among citizens and circumstances in which they find themselves. In terms of Dewey's (1988c) method, the operative means of valuation is "ends-in-view."

By exploring this language structure, communicative ethics is concerned not so much with the formulation of concrete norms or values as much as it is concerned with the grounding of normativity itself. But from this perspective, Aragaki (1993) suggests that rather than assuming a deontological purpose that seeks to explain the validity of norms preoccupied with answers and solutions, the value of discourse ethics lies more in its capacity to explain how community and solidarity are built within a group. The process is more important than the product. Rather than seeing universalizability as the construction of normative values, it becomes instead a transcultural moral principle unfolding within human communication. The symmetry and reciprocity of discourse ethics nurtures empathy and solidarity which, in turn, builds community. The justice that results from consensus around norms is only half the equation. The other half, community, is now sustained. Thus, the relevance to communitarian philosophy is evident. As Aragaki sees it, Habermas' communicative action complements classic liberalism's ethic of justice with an ethic of value. In doing so, it offers a bridge to resolve the liberal-communitarian debate. This ethic of value gives shape and substance to the civic republican side of the equation.

All this brings forth the inference that we need to put less effort in using discourse to attain consensus and solving problems, and more effort into fostering the quality of dialogue in the direction of the ideal speech conditions that build community and social capital. Consensus, of itself, may be morally deficient. The focus of concern is not the conclusion of the discourse, but the process leading to it. From this standpoint, the

primary function of dialogue is to nurture the relationships that sustain a meaningful and vibrant lifeworld. It is that dynamic to which participants in the discourse find themselves most committed. To that end, one's aim should seek to "keep the conversation going" (Isaacs, 1999).

To understand moral conversation or "values talk" as the practice of discourse ethics, we must understand the process itself and find means to overcome a certain dialogue deficit (Yankelovich, 1999). This will require that we restore legitimacy to pre-scientific forms of knowledge that are not necessarily based on information and fact giving alone. We need to also appeal to subjective and intuitive forms of knowing, tacit knowledge, values, and belief systems that shape meaning and orient knowledge in the context of relationships. Building upon the earlier work of Buber (1970), theoretical physicist David Bohm (1996) presents a ground-breaking approach. He sees dialogue as fundamentally a creative process where individual convictions and the compulsion to persuade others is suspended in open and empty space that allows for new meaning to emerge. Much of what is put forth as dialogue is actually discussion. Discussion breaks things open in rational analysis, with limited value, garnering points for winners that advance what are perceived as correct solutions. But in dialogue, there are no points to be gained as participants freely enter the space that allows their assumptions to be understood. There is no impulse or necessity to resolve problems. The aim of dialogue is not so much about truth as it is about meaning that is emergent, flowing, not static. Ultimately, Bohm sees dialogue as the pathway to a transformed society as collective consciousness is formed. The fruit is participation in community, syncronicity, communion and wholeness, where human thought is fundamentally a collective experience rather than an individual one.

A dialogical moral ethic levels the playing field among participants who have unequal power, giving the group process control over the means of communication and

interpretation, rather than acquiescing to the established vocabulary of the dominant power that interprets needs according to predetermined criteria. It resists the adoption of a privileged position that inhibits more thoughtful scrutiny. So liberated, the discourse promotes an ethic of solidarity (Fraser, 1986). The process is fluid and mobile, a "voyage of discovery" where moral judgments are waiting to be discovered through dialogue, as a community project, where they exist "in the existential gaps of life awaiting enunciation and clarification" (Elliott, 1994). The dialogue enables us to move from being moral strangers to at least moral acquaintances, if not moral friends (Loewy, 1997). Its fruit is a homeostasis, stability, and democratic co-existence that holds the community together. An ethic of "compassionate rationality" engenders trust which makes the dialogue process self perpetuating and continually renewing.

Besides group solidarity, discourse ethics strives to maintain intellectual solidarity where participants are willing to take each other seriously enough to engage one another in substantive talk about what they think makes life worth living (Douglass & Hollenbach, 1994). This call for far more than simply the safe tolerance evidenced in good manners that avoids conflict by narrowly negotiating the amoral discourse of proceduralism. In genuine discourse, tolerance is not used as an excuse to avoid disagreement. Instead, it motivates a willing and open embrace of disagreement in efforts to attain greater understanding through critique, judgment and dialogue (Ternasky, 1995). It demands of citizens a reconstruction of how one understands freedom, calling citizens beyond a negative view that is a privatized and self-serving "freedom-from." Rather, it calls for intellectual solidarity and engagement with others that makes possible a community of "freedom-for" that values and celebrates the collective good and the genuine participation of all within the dynamics of civil society. This intellectual solidarity calls for the abandonment of ideologies and the suspension of

absolutist positions that inhibit common values from emerging, as well as an acceptance of the provisional nature of public moral judgments (Elliott, 1994).

<u>Practical Models</u>

I conclude with some practical models for moral discourse in various organizational contexts. Though a number of authors address the need for sound ethical practice in the workplace, most of the literature is procedural and centered on the individual ethical practice of the leader person (Gini, 1999; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996; London, 1999; McCoy, 1985). Few authors actually posture methods that employ moral discourse as an ethical practice. Nielson (1990) advocates dialogic leadership, but his approach is mostly theoretical and in the context of organizational learning and development. More recently, Baeyer and Maguire's innovative work in Canada provides promising evidence to more practical applications that specifically integrate discourse ethics as a method to address values and group moral decision making in a business setting (Baeyer, 1999; Maguire & Baeyer, 1998). Though he does not use categories of discourse ethics, Brown (1990, 1999) proposes an "ethical process" that is dialogical and a means to empower workers and develop learning organizations. His approach views organizations as networks of power relations as well as networks of people and is driven by the practical need to make moral decisions that directly bear upon policy decisions. He integrates rationality with relationships, inviting participants to explore the basis for their disagreements in the form of argumentative discourse (Toumlin, 1957). The ethical process begins with policy proposals and draws from resources impacting group decision making including collective observations, value judgments, underlying assumptions and opposing views.

Brown's model differs substantially from Bohm's (1996) process of generative dialogue. In the latter, discourse begins with a question or a problem, not a policy

decision or conclusion. Bohm presumes a more open-ended approach with an unknown resolution yet to be revealed. More reflective of that aim, Isaacs (1999) presents a practical management prescript, drawing upon Bohm's theory. Isaacs' approach is based on action research and his experience in organizational consulting. He sees dialogue as shared inquiry, a way of thinking together that harnesses the collective intelligence of the group, building capacity for new behavior. It requires a posture of advocacy and inquiry, and is distinct from discussion, debate and argumentation. Generative dialogue creates a flow of meaning driven by a willingness to suspend judgment. It is conversation with a center, not sides.

Bird (1996) places moral discourse between two extremes. At one end, the speaker makes a value statement and offers no reason for the position, leaving others to take it or leave it. There is no invitation to dialogue. At the other extreme, the speaker issues value-laden commands as orders to be followed, again without reasons, though sanctions may be threatened to assure compliance. For Bird, moral discourse lies somewhere in the middle. One states one's views and may even do so with commands, but one does so with accompanying justification. Most significantly, one's views are stated in such a way that elicits feedback and response from others. We practice moral discourse when we express our moral concerns in ways that make claims on how we hope others will act, but we do so by giving "intelligible justifications that are inherently discussable" (p. 33). Bird goes on to describe moral discourse as interactive communication that unfolds over time and is conversational in planned and unplanned ways. It is cumulative and contextual, having a narrative quality influenced by memories, anticipations, and contingencies of the present moment.

Yankelovich (1999) suggests practical guidelines on how leaders can stimulate dialogue and moral conversation within the workplace and other organizational settings. There are skills that a leader can employ that facilitate the shift from casual conversation

and agenda-driven meetings to genuine moral discourse. Leaders will need to disarm themselves in order to equalize power relationships when engaging subordinates. Participants will need to give ground and be willing to step back from expected modes of thinking that reflect conventional attitudes within the organization. Leaders need to sincerely ask not only what others think, but what they really mean. Dialogue will progress more readily by emphasizing common interests instead of divisive ones, and dialogue must be freed from the expectation of having to produce firm decisions prematurely.

The process requires appreciation for the purpose of meetings that move beyond a preoccupation with time constraints, delimited agendas and the need for decisive efficient problem solving. Leaders can stimulate dialogue by revealing their own assumptions as well as the emotions and values that underlie their perspectives on issues at hand. But leaders are not necessarily the ones who initiate the dialogue. They need to be attuned to the shift toward a dialogue of conviction (Etzioni, 1996) when others risk giving ground, breaking the mold, and speaking passionately on the basis of strongly held beliefs. In some cases, longer protracted dialogic processes may be called for, perhaps engaging the services of an outside facilitator. But leaders should not abdicate their own responsibilities in dialogue by placing undue control in the hands of consultants.

If there are limited models for moral discourse in the workplace, there are even fewer in civic organizations and other settings of civil society. Most approaches are issue-centered or deal with problem solving and conflict resolution. They include methods employed by the Public Conversations Project (PCP) (Becker, Chasin, Chasin, Herzig, & Roth, 1995; Chasin et al., 1996), the National Issues Forum (Kettering Foundation, 1998; O'Connell, 1997); and Fishkin's attempts at deliberative democracy (Fishkin, 1991; McAfee, 1994). All employ models of action research and are

consequently issue-centered. Of these, PCP demonstrates the most systematic approach as it seeks to develop models for dialogue on divisive political issues such as the abortion controversy. Sociopolitical forces within a democracy can create a dominant discourse on polarized issues which may discourage citizens from speaking fully. People with complicated views that move between the polarized points of view often silence themselves entirely. As a result, complex human and social dilemmas turn into bitter polarized political stand-offs. Researchers at PCP identify four objectives in the dialogue process: (1) to adequately prepare participants for the dialogue; (2) to create a safe environment; (3) to avoid the old debate; and (4) to foster creation of new conversation.

But PCP's approach is on problem solving. The discussion does not practice dialogue in ways that generate new ideas through synergy; rather, its aim is to resolve conflict. Though it calls participants to withhold attempts to persuade others to adopt one's own position, it does not call people to suspend judgment of others nor let go of their own position. At best, this approach can lead to better understanding of each participant's perspective, but it provides little means to move beyond one's own predisposition in order to create the open space for new insight that can integrate the polarity of division. Therapeutic in its orientation, the PCP process is more about mediated conflict resolution than transformative mediation (Bush & Folger, 1994) which stresses empowerment and recognition. Because it takes a problem-solving approach, it is morally limiting, leaving fewer opportunities for developing the moral capacities of people to connect with others. To the contrary, transformative mediation aims to empower parties and allow them to appreciate each other's predicament, regardless of any settlement.

Each of these models in the civic setting is generally convened for purposes of discussing particular issues rather than promoting genuine critical dialogue. From a

communitarian perspective, the latter would better be served in natural communities that are the constitutive communities that define where citizens actually live their daily lives and from which they gain their identity (Bell, 1993). They are the natural support systems that provide for the growth and development of citizens (Delgado & Rivera, 1997). They are stable but diverse communities and neighborhoods built on the foundation of families and households where citizens have some element of a shared common life through free association with one another (Popenoe, 1995). They are the building blocks of civil society and include the workplace, churches, schools, unions, fraternal organizations and the like, where relationships are formed.

Civic moral discourse requires that public space for that dialogue to unfold, and research indicates that such space is not readily accessible to most citizens (Kettering Foundation, 1998). If natural communities can better serve the dynamics of critical moral discourse, then leadership within those settings needs to find means to make them appropriate forums.

Yet, there is little research that indicates how such natural communities can respond to that challenge. Ellison (1995) represents one such creative effort to understand how leaders of church congregations in the Lutheran community engage their constituents in moral conversation around controversial issues. Her study represents the only research specifically focused on how leaders in natural communities facilitate moral discourse. To that extent, her work is particularly relevant to my own study. Ellison acknowledges that public moral conversation is a rare experience in American society and concludes that most groups lack effective methods for nurturing it and few are willing to lead it. The result is that most moral discourse takes place in private circles. Her qualitative approach resonates with the aims of my own study, where she attempts to understand the particular experience of pastors who employ a model for leading groups in moral discourse. She unpacks the meanings that underlie the leaders'

behaviors, skills, attitudes and knowledge bases, and interprets their experience in the context of metaphorical categories of pioneer, prophet and servant-leader.

Schools are also natural communities and appropriate venues for moral discourse. I have already considered their practice in the context of the moral education of students. However, there is a general absence of research that addresses how faculty and school administrators engage moral discourse among themselves and within the day-to-day operations of the school experience. The school itself is an embryonic democratic community that models the larger democratic society (Dewey, 1916). To the extent moral discourse is a constitutive part of democratic practice, it should be evident in the day-to-day lifeworld of the school. Sergiovanni (1996) certainly constructs the theoretical underpinnings for such practice and Strike (1993, 1995) paints some approaches that impact the professional development of teachers. But beyond that, there are few models that illustrate how moral discourse can be employed by school leadership.

To conclude this section, a primary aim of moral discourse is to facilitate a shift from individual self interest to commitment to community values. As the community reflects on those values, it constructs its identity. Theoretical models for doing moral discourse can be drawn from social, political and moral philosophers as well as moral educators. However, the latter are largely focused on processes of moral reasoning motivated by individualist approaches to moral development that fall short of integrating commitment to community values and de-emphasize the moral goodness of judgments. In these models, moral discourse serves the formation of conscience, with little aim to define community identification, common ground or common good.

More helpful approaches can be found in Dewey's method of social intelligence and Habermas' method of communicative action in discourse ethics. Both thinkers have

influenced contemporary communitarian theory regarding moral discourse. Yet, there is little research that can validate workable models. There is need to place greater importance on the quality of dialogue to create speech situations that allow for non-cognitive modes of expression to enter into human communication. This will require that moral dialogue not be driven with the primary need to attain immediate results to resolve problem situations. There is greater need to consider the processes that can create open space for collective and novel thought to surface. It is primarily the process of dialogue and the relations it helps to sustain in the lifeworld, to which participants find themselves committed. The process of moral discourse constructs solidarity within community. A dialogical moral ethic equalizes power and frees the group process from being controlled by the cultural dominant discourse. It strives to maintain intellectual solidarity as participants engage in meaningful conversations that matter. It embraces disagreement in the spirit of gaining increased understanding, and calls for the suspension of ideology, moral absolutes and predispositions.

Recent literature demonstrates beginning efforts in developing practical models for engaging in moral discourse within the workplace. But many of these approaches tend to be overly rational and place too much emphasis on problem solving rather than the dialogue process itself. Research indicates that leaders can enhance prospects for moral discourse through certain behaviors and skills. Other models deal with moral discourse within civic organizations, but many of these approaches are issue driven, therapeutic, and again, centered on problem solving. Other approaches need to be drawn from communitarian perspectives that base moral discourse within natural communities including schools, churches, neighborhood associations and other constitutive groups that comprise civil society.

Summary

The foregoing literature review considered four overlapping areas that explicate the intellectual frames that relate to the research question that underlies this study. Those areas are: (1) leadership ethics in the context of critical transformational leadership; (2) the contemporary resurgence of communitarian political philosophy; (3) contributions from moral and civic education, particularly as they relate to models of adult critical pedagogy; and (4) a consideration of the literature regarding the practice of moral discourse, particularly in the context of Critical Theory and discourse ethics.

The review demonstrates that genuine models of transformational leadership underscore the need to build commitment within organizations through moral communication that addresses the formation of shared values that can become the impetus for organizational and society change. The process is fundamentally relational and dialogic as it strives to surface shared meaning among conversational participants.

The review went on to draw connections with communitarian public philosophy. The latter presumes a dialogic process that seeks to uncover the common good while nurturing the formation of civic values that call forth a balance between individual self interest and participants' concomitant responsibility to the larger organizational and social order. Communitarianism emphasizes processes of democratic deliberation that acknowledge our social embeddedness within constitutive communities that shape our social context and organizational life. It moves beyond the constraints of proceduralism by calling for dynamic democratic civic discourse that engages participants as citizens who deliberate moral values in the public sphere. As citizens do so, they construct the social capital that builds solidarity within civil society. But the literature demonstrates a

general lack of research that can explain how communitarian theory and practice function within the dynamics of public moral discourse.

Those processes require a consideration of the role of moral and civic education and how such education can nurture the formation of virtue that sustains the common good amidst the diversity of values in a pluralistic society. Citizens need to be educated to develop the dispositions and civic virtue that uphold commitment and participation within the commonwealth. This is the formative challenge of democracy and is a primary aim of education. The literature on adult education and critical pedagogy is particularly relevant to the central question of this study, as it considers dialogic modes of learning that construct meaning within the context of lived experience.

Finally, this review suggests that the practice of moral discourse lies at the heart of the interface between transformational leadership and communitarian political theory. Theoretical models for doing moral discourse can be drawn from social, political and moral philosophers, as well as moral educators. But these approaches are typically individualistic and overly rational. The literature suggests that more fruitful approaches might be based in Dewey's method of social intelligence and Habermas' method of communicative action in discourse ethics. Yet, there is little research that validates these or other workable models. There is a need to consider the processes that create the open space for collective and fruitful moral conversation to enfold within organizations and civil society. This study attempts to respond to that research need.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

Having presented a review of the related literature, I now set forth the procedures and methods used to undertake the study. This chapter begins with a rationale for a qualitative approach and its applicability to the research question. The chapter goes on to consider a rationale for data collection strategies that were employed as well as an account of the processes used to select participants in the study. Specific data collection procedures for the focus groups and individual interviews are then discussed. That is followed by an explanation for the methods of data analysis and interpretation. The chapter concludes with a consideration of issues regarding validity, reliability, ethical concerns, and methodological limitations.

Rationale for a Qualitative Approach

Lincoln (1989) underscores the research challenge by calling for qualitative approaches that engage both Critical Theory and postmodernism in studies related to transformational leadership. This study addressed that challenge because the practice of moral discourse is itself the very means of critical reflection on history. Moral conversation might be viewed as the "ground zero" of the postmodern dilemma that makes values talk so difficult in an age of pluralism and multiculturalism. When leaders facilitate moral discourse, they emulate critical transformational leadership that promotes the praxis of critical thinking and moral action that advances democracy (Tierney, 1989).

Lincoln argues that qualitative inquiry is a particularly appropriate means to study transformational leadership in its critical context. As a dialogic process itself, qualitative research is a transformative activity. Like moral discourse, it seeks to engage understanding and meaning. Like moral discourse, it stretches the bounds of empirical understanding and embraces a wider frame of knowledge. In many cases that

knowledge is outside the bounds of normal cognition as we talk about our values and engage forms of moral discourse without full awareness that we do so. As such, moral discourse is often the domain of tacit knowledge outside the cognitive understanding of those leaders who practice it. For this reason, it is particularly suitable fodder for qualitative inquiry that seeks to understand the why and how of the phenomenon. And so my aim has been to gain epistemic insight (Eisner, 1991) by being able to see through the eyes of certain leaders as they come to make sense of their experience as agents of moral conversation.

As a form of qualitative inquiry, my research is context specific because it investigates moral discourse in the context of the participants' life stories, relationships, and experiences. It is field-based, seeks relationship with the whole, and is hermeneutical in that it strives to interpret experience and explain its meaning (Edson, 1988). It assumes an emic orientation that seeks understanding from the perspective of participants. The approach involved an inductive strategy that yielded thick description demonstrating quality, depth, and richness in the findings (Geertz, 1973; Merriam, 1998). The analysis was both descriptive and interpretive, with attention given to particular incidents and stories marked with expressive language. The aim was to produce an analysis that was coherent, insightful, pregnant with meaning, and that possesses instrumental utility for future research (Eisner, 1991).

This study is both exploratory and descriptive (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It is descriptive because it seeks to document the phenomenon of moral discourse by investigating the salient behaviors, events, values, beliefs, and structures used by leaders as they engage their constituents in values talk. It strives to describe what they see by visually communicating and by creating a feel for the phenomenon. But it is also exploratory research because it investigated a subject matter where relevant categories were not clearly identified before. In the absence of those categories, my intent was to

gain new understanding by uncovering the tacit knowledge and experience of leaders' behaviors regarding moral conversation. As a practice in exploratory research, this study serves to identify important variables, themes, and categories that can contribute to grounded theory as well as provide focus for subsequent research.

I am mindful that qualitative inquiry itself can be viewed as a form of moral discourse (Edson, 1988). It is a means to restore the language necessary to make moral sense of our private and public lives (Bellah et al., 1985). Qualitative inquiry helps to facilitate the kinds of socially communicative interactions that build community. "Moral discourse and qualitative inquiry allow us to connect our aspirations for ourselves and those closest to us with the aspirations of a larger whole and see our efforts as being, in part, a contribution to a common good" (Edson, 1988, p. 46). Such a communitarian context makes the qualitative research approach all the more appropriate.

The process is clouded with ambiguity and uncertainty but also has gifted moments of clarity along the way. I chose a qualitative approach not so much because I did not know the answers, but rather, for an appreciation of my desire to discover the right questions to ask. Qualitative research questions assumptions and allows for suspension of predisposed convictions by examining evidence from new perspectives (Edson, 1988). It emulates well the processes of dialogue and moral discourse as it seeks to understand phenomena in their complexity and to expand one's frame of reference through critical thinking. By looking beyond assumptions, we can come to appreciate the complex, ambiguous, multi-dimensional and multi-directional relationships that exist in the leadership function as it relates to moral discourse.

In terms of my communitarian suppositional context, qualitative inquiry proved to be a helpful means to unpack participants' constitutive communities (Bell, 1993). It provided a means to better understand the relationships that give context to participants' practice of moral conversation. Like communitarianism, qualitative research aims to

discover shared meaning. Its fruit is not absolute truth or certainty but multiple truths that are heuristic, capturing the essence of the phenomenon in order to know it. Like the nature of moral dialogue it generates a flow of meaning (Isaacs, 1999). If qualitative research is about unpacking meaning, then moral discourse is one of its critical data sources. And so the subject of my query, moral discourse, is also the very means of investigating it.

The philosophical and political underpinnings of my study are phenomenological and assume a post-positivistic paradigm that is sensitive to power relationships, puts importance on human dimensions of what is studied, engages people by giving them voice, and is aware of the political implications of research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Its epistemological orientation assumes that there are multiple ways of knowing and that the research is driven by the desire to understand that reality in the experience of the participants. Rightness or wrongness is not the point. Absolutes are not defined and are irrelevant. What matters most is what the participants value in the context of their experiences and the actions and behaviors that ensue. The aim is to see with them, to perceive and experience those qualities as they are presented through the data collection process.

<center>Data Collection Strategies: Focus Groups and Interviews</center>

I chose a data collection strategy that employed focus groups and interviews. I recognize that such formal techniques are not naturalistic in the truest sense of ethnographic inquiry, as the setting for data collection was formal and deliberately contrived. Still, the setting was field-based in the qualitative tradition because it engaged participants in methods wherein they reflected on their life experience in ways to make sense of their lived experience.

Focus groups were originally developed as a tool of social science researchers (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1956), but they were later co-opted by market researchers and more recently by political campaign strategists. Though largely neglected for some time by their original creators, recent years have seen a renewed effort by social scientists and the educational community to retrieve this method of research (Lederman, 1990; Montell, 1999; Morgan, 1988).

Morgan (1988, 1993, 1996; Morgan & Krueger, 1993) has led the movement to reclaim the tradition within the social sciences. Focus groups have a capacity to access tacit and experiential knowledge, perspectives, and meanings of participants. Of greater significance is the ability of focus groups to study individuals within the context of the collective, thus reinforcing the communitarian lens of my research.

Interactions in focus groups take place among the participants as well as between group members and the facilitator. The data are often richer and deeper than can be obtained through individual interviews. Krueger (1993, 1994) suggests that individual interviews can miss the mark when the topic of research is complex, as many persons may have no clear opinion on the matter or may not be able to interpret their own tacit understanding of the issue. Further, individuals typically do not form their beliefs and values on complex matters in isolation (Albrecht, Johnson, & Walther, 1993; Yankelovich, 1991). They need to be stimulated in order to become reflective. The spontaneous dialogue in focus groups can often produce insights that are not as readily gained through quantitative surveys and experiments, nor through individual interviews. The particular advantage of focus groups is the synergistic effect of interaction and the emergence of the novel. Accordingly, the group discourse serves as a means to produce data that would be less accessible through most any other means (Morgan, 1988) .

Other advantages of focus groups are their capacity to generate breadth of data in a relatively short period of time and their educational effectiveness in providing much

preliminary and descriptive data relevant to complex issues (Lederman, 1990). Focus groups also accommodate Lincoln's (1989) concerns for Critical Theory and postmodernism regarding the equalization of power. As Montell (1999) argues, they are more egalitarian and less exploitative of subjects than other methods, and thus empower research participants and the researcher.

The literature defines a focus group as a gathering of six to ten persons who are reasonably homogenous but relatively unfamiliar with each other. The purpose of a focus group is to provide qualitative data in a focused discussion of a particular event, experience or phenomenon (Krueger, 1994). The primary purpose of focus groups is information gathering, not decision making as is the case with the nominal group technique. For this reason, focus groups are particularly well suited for gathering a wide spectrum of data on complex behaviors.

The decision to use focus groups was appropriate because the purpose of this study was to uncover complex behavior and motivation. Focus groups serve that end well as they can provide insight into complicated topics where opinions or attitudes are conditional or where the area of concern relates to multifaceted behavior or motivation (Krueger, 1994; Morgan & Krueger, 1993). Many of the behaviors I sought to understand were often not matters of conscious significance in the minds of the participants, because people often are not in touch with or able to articulate their motivations, feelings, attitudes, and opinions. Yet, their significance emerged as meaning-making was constructed in the course of the group discourse.

At the beginning of the focus groups, participants at times had initial difficulty expressing their feelings or motivations. But as they would hear others speak, they became stimulated, pumped, primed, and prompted so that they could contextualize their experience in ways that made sense and in ways that they could begin to articulate. By sharing and comparing their lived experiences, participants came to express insights

about their own experience, increasing their own awareness and cognition. These dynamics demonstrated well the interactive nature of focus groups as participants opened their minds in the dialogue process and came to see things previously unseen. Thus, because the data unfold through the group interaction, it is more than the sum of individual data. The result is a synergy that individuals alone could not achieve.

For these reasons, Frey and Fontana (1993) suggest that focus groups can better respond to the postmodern criticism poised by researchers who are seen as controlling the research paradigm through the use of subjective interpretations and self-validating assumptions. Focus groups can bring forth data that are polyphonic, representing a multiplicity of voices, thereby constraining the researcher's risk of bias and enhancing internal validity. Because more individuals participate, there is a broad spectrum of opinion that diffuses the influence of the interviewer-facilitator. This process provides a built-in means to triangulate data.

Focus groups are communication events that have the capacity to alter participants' affective and cognitive states and facilitate change (Albrecht et al., 1993). But they are also political events, as they stimulate sociological imagination (Mills, 1959) by fusing social exchange with social research. Focus groups open up the social cognition of participants rather than simply reproducing dominant ideology or dominant discourse (Becker et al., 1995; Johnson, 1996). They are a means for participants to interpret personal issues within the wider socio-political systems that shape social structures and institutions. These dynamics illustrate the affinity that exists between Critical Theory and moral discourse. Both speak to processes that empower participants to interpret their own reality and to uncover what was previously unknown, unclear, and non-rational. The focus group process underscored my desire to engage participants as research-partners who could be empowered to make meaning out of their own reality through reflectivity and the construction of cognition. In doing so, the process emulated

Padilla's (1993) notion of dialogic research and demonstrated an affinity with Habermas' (1984, 1990a) theory of communicative action. The interface clearly reflects themes in the literature review and underscores the appropriateness and integration of my methodology with my research question. To a certain extent, the medium becomes one with the message. Dialogue is both the means and the focus of my research endeavor. It is the focus of the research, that is, moral discourse, and it is the means for doing the research, that is, the focus group interactions.

Given that transformational leadership also involves communication as a means to engender shared meaning for the purposes of effecting organizational change, focus groups might be viewed as a lens on the dynamics of transformational leadership in action. The focus group has the capacity to develop shared meaning and as such constitutes a transformational learning event in and of itself. Again, the medium and the message intersect. As a communication event, the focus group experience becomes an occasion for moral discourse.

In an effort to expand and triangulate data collection, I also chose to employ individual in-depth interviews. The data obtained through focus groups can be significantly expanded and validated by use of subsequent interviews with selected participants of the focus groups (Crabtree, Yanoshik, Miller, & O'Connor, 1993; Morgan, 1996). While focus groups can garner a greater breadth of data, individual interviews can access greater depth on particular ideas that may have been generated within the focus groups. The in-depth interview is an established technique for gathering data in qualitative research because it provides an opportunity for the investigator to enter into the world, culture, and experience of the respondent. It as "a conversation with a purpose" (Dexter, 1970) that seeks to unpack and understand the experience of the interviewee by entering into the other person's perspective (Patton, 1990). As in the focus groups, interviewees were approached as participants rather than simply subjects

or respondents. The word <u>participant</u> communicates the level of active involvement and equity that I sought to bring into the interview relationship (Seidman, 1991).

I used Patton's (1990) model of the informal conversational interview, where the researcher enters the conversation with a clear focus of inquiry but allows the interview to progress like an open-ended dialogue. As interviewer, I facilitated the dialogue in a manner that drew out further issues that had not been previously identified in the focus groups. I attempted to steer the exchange in ways that brought forth helpful data and experience relevant to the study. Some methodologists (Heshusius, 1994; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995) have taken the interview process to a greater level of sophistication in order to make it the context for genuine dialogue. As in the case of focus groups, the researcher enters into and sees the perspectives of the other while at the same time stimulating the creativity of the respondent to unpack the emic meaning of experience. Holstein and Gubrium (1995) call this an "active" interview. The respondent is not so much an informant but rather a conversational partner with the researcher, engaged in a collaborative process of making meaning.

The active interview does not see the interviewee as simply a subject to be tapped; rather, the interviewee is as a self-directed participant who can be cultivated and stimulated in order to unpack his or her own interpretive capacities. The interviewer encourages the respondent to shift positions in order to explore alternate perspectives. The aim is to systemically activate alternative ways of knowing. I attempted to do so by consciously provoking responses that were germane to the focus of the study, as well as by facilitating participants reflectivity by suggesting and testing ways in which they might conceptualize issues and make connections with data from the prior focus groups. In practicing this kind of active interview, I found reasonable success in my own capacity to harness the participants' construction of storytelling in a manner that was relevant to the my own task as researcher (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Both parties were active, each

involved in meaning-making. Meaning comes about not through simple responses to overt questions; rather, it seeps through as it is communicatively constructed in the dialogic encounter. My respondents became constructors of knowledge as they would collaborate with me, the interviewer (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). This approach again underscored my desire to affirm their role as research partners.

<p style="text-align:center;">Entrée and Participant Selection</p>

To gain access to community leaders and to enhance the credibility of my research among those participants, I solicited the support of the Jacksonville chapter of the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ). One of 65 affiliates across the nation, NCCJ is a human relations organization dedicated to ending racism and bigotry by promoting understanding and respect among all races, religions, and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution, and education. NCCJ is committed to building a better world by being a moral agent for change in the community. Its culture is grounded in a belief that the Jacksonville community needs to find better means to enhance understanding of values that shape common ground and that build unity within the diversity of the community. The mission of NCCJ describes its goal as one of "opening minds to transform communities" by promoting more inclusive workplaces, enhanced interfaith understanding, and creating a more just society (National Conference for Community and Justice, 1998, p. 4). The purposes of NCCJ accommodated well the focus of my own research, and the relationship proved to be particularly appropriate. NCCJ endorsed my research and allowed me use of its letterhead and logo in correspondence and printed materials produced in conjunction with the project.

I undertook an extensive process to identify appropriate candidates to participate in the focus groups and interviews. Recruitment began with a nomination process that yielded 264 nominees, of which 192 were unduplicated. The nominations were received from 19 nominators who were strategically chosen to assure a wide field of potential

participants. Nominators were persons who were knowledgeable of diverse leaders across the community and were either staff or board members of agencies representing a diverse range of organizations including the following. NCCJ, Duval County School Board, Jacksonville Community Council Incorporated (JCCI), Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Northeast Florida, College of Education at the University of North Florida, Leadership Jacksonville, Florida Community College at Jacksonville, Bureau of Catholic Charities of the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine, The Florida Times Union, and a private organizational consulting firm.

Nominators were asked to recommend participants across several organizational sectors using a Participant Nomination Form (see Appendix A). Following the protocol recommended by Edmonds (1999), the nomination form was designed to surface candidates who reflected a certain participant profile (see Appendix B). That profile factored several control characteristics (Knodel, 1993) that included universal controls common to all participants as well as composite controls that sought to balance representation of certain characteristics across all three focus groups. There were five universal control characteristics common to all nominees: (1) all nominees were residents of the Jacksonville metropolitan area; (2) they were perceived as leaders who were either appointed, elected, hired or volunteered; (3) in the perspective of their respective nominator, each demonstrated some aspect of a transformational leadership style that was charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating, or caring and enabling (Bass, 1985); (4) each possessed excellent verbal communication skills; and (5) the nominees demonstrated civic-mindedness evidenced by involvement in community affairs and a genuine concern for the public good and the quality of life in the Jacksonville community. The nomination form also factored composite controls to assure racial and gender balance as well as representation across eight types of organizations across the private, public, and social sectors.

Of the initial pool of 192 nominees, 152 were selected as prospective candidates and sent a letter (see Appendix C) inviting their potential participation. In order to minimize tacit assumptions, the letter assured that consistent information was given to each prospective participant about the purpose of the study. If willing to participate, candidates were asked to complete and return the Participant Screening Questionnaire (see Appendix D) designed to further qualify them and provide data needed to construct three focus groups with a composite profile consistent with the methodology of the study. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: (1) a version of the <u>Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire</u> (MLQ-6S) by Bass and Avolio (1992); (2) an adaptation of Karp's (1997) <u>Communitarian Survey</u>, designed to assess a communitarian political orientation as distinct from individualist and social conservative orientations; and (3) demographic information. A statement of informed consent, to be signed by all who volunteered, was included in the questionnaire packet. The consent form (see Appendix E) was based on McCracken's (1988) model and accommodated the requirements of the Institutional Review Board of the University of North Florida regarding the treatment of human subjects while engaged in academic research. Finally, the questionnaire concluded by asking the prospective participants to indicate their availability at prescribed meeting times for focus group sessions, pending their final selection as participants.

Of the 152 pre-qualified nominees, 63 candidates volunteered to participate and submitted the completed Participant Screening Questionnaire, representing a 41% response rate. Twelve more candidates voluntarily contacted the researcher to express their interest in the study but chose to decline due to time constraints. Total respondents, including those who voluntarily called to express regrets, numbered 75. This represents nearly a 50% response rate. See Figure 2 and Figure 3 for the comparative response rate across the organizational sectors. The high rate of response would seem to indicate that the subject matter of the study was of particular interest to these leaders.

Figure 2. Nominal Response Rate of 152 Nominees by organizational sectors.

	Education	Hlth & Human Serv Prov	Civic & Advocacy Org	Business / Private Ind	Media	Religious Congregation	Govt & Public Agency	Other/Professional
□ N/R	13	5	8	27	6	7	6	5
■ No	3	0	1	1	1	1	3	2
⊞ Yes	10	11	9	9	4	6	10	4
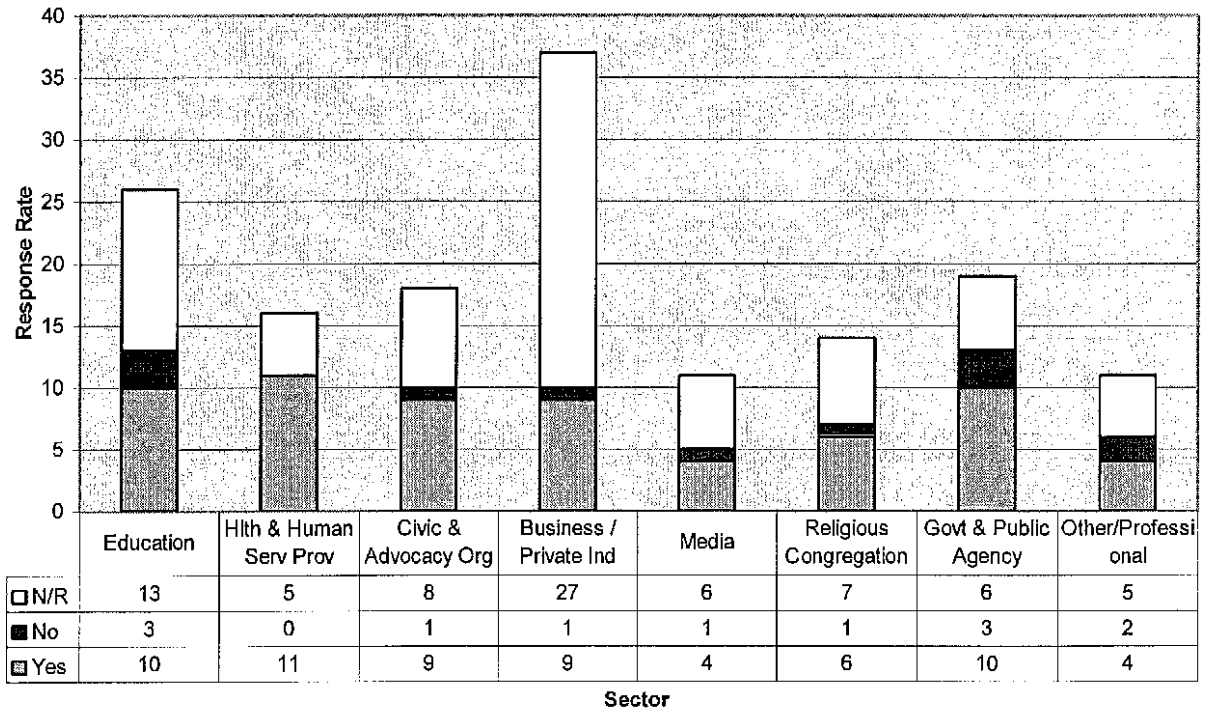
Sector

Figure 3. Percent Response Rate of 152 Nominees by organizational sectors.

	Education	Hlth & Human Serv Prov	Civic & Advocacy Org	Business / Private Ind	Media	Religious Congregation	Govt & Public Agency	Other / Professional
□ N/R	50	31.2	44.4	73	54.5	50	31.6	45.4
■ No	11.5	0	5.6	2.7	9.1	7.1	15.8	18.2
⊞ Yes	38.5	68.8	50	24.3	36.4	42.9	52.6	36.4

Sector
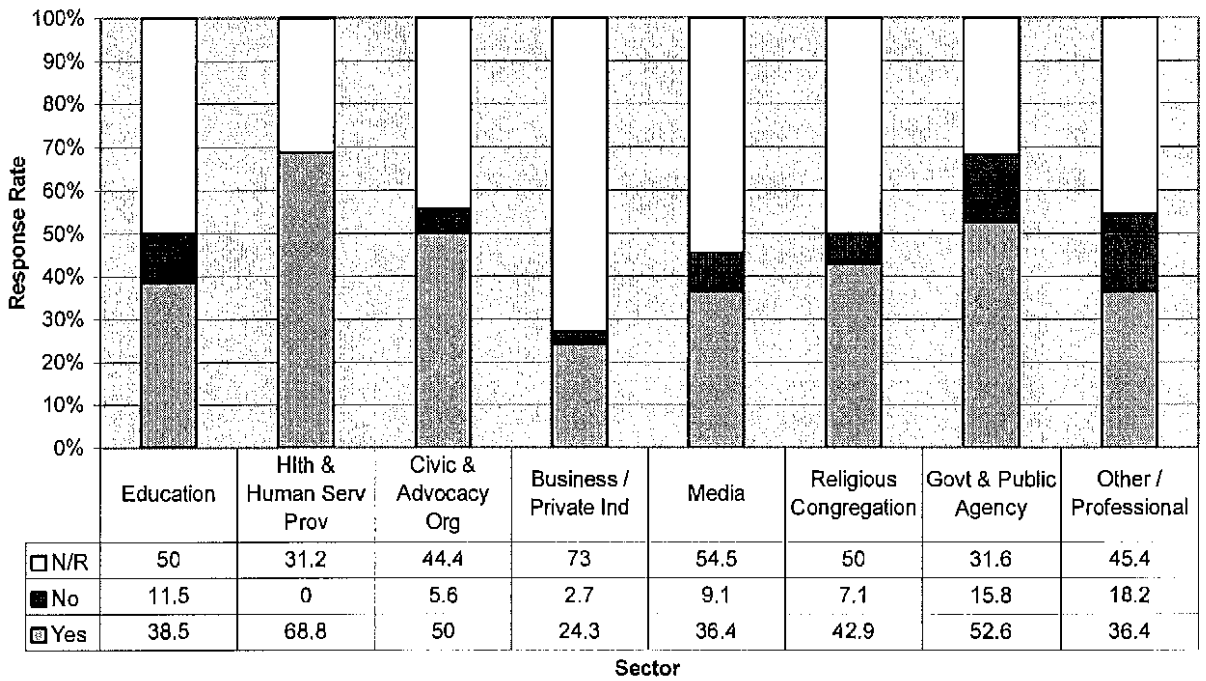
The results of the Participant Screening Questionnaire submitted by the 63 volunteers are reported in Appendix F. From this group, I initially selected 24 candidates in three groups of eight who were invited to participate in the focus groups. Selection was based on candidates who best fit the two primary criteria: (1) a transformational leadership orientation, evidenced by a minimum 4.00 point spread between the Transformational (TF) and Transactional (TA) scores; and (2) demonstration of a communitarian political orientation, evidenced by a K-com score of 6, based on Karp's 15-point scale. Beyond those two primary criteria based on the MLQ and Communitarian Survey instruments, several secondary criteria were factored in the selection process. Secondary criteria included: (1) representation across the organizational sectors within each of the focus groups; (2) gender and racial balance within each focus group; and (3) availability to meet in one of the focus groups at the prescribed time.

At this point I wish to digress and explain my rationale in selecting the two instruments I used as the basis for the primary criteria used in the screening process. In doing so, I also speak to inherent limitations and ambiguities in the use of both instruments, as well as a number of corollary criteria that I used in borderline cases. The first portion of my screening questionnaire was based on Bass and Avolio's (1992) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and its reliability as a means to assess a continuum of leadership style has been well demonstrated (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1995). However, I acknowledge the limitations incurred by only using the "self-rated" portion of the instrument. A better way, but considerably more complex and beyond the scope of this study, would have involved additional ratings by colleagues of each candidate. Bass (1990, p. 888) expresses caution about the limitations of leader self-ratings because those scores can relate poorly to the ratings of colleagues, whether supervisor or underling. Self-ratings can be contaminated by social desirability factors. The scores may be descriptive of what leaders think they should be like and may not necessarily

report how they actually function. A more thorough assessment of transformational leadership style would require the fullest application of the MLQ and include leaders' ratings by their subordinates and colleagues.

Bass further cautions against seeing the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership style in sharp polarity that mutually excludes one from the other. He argues that most transformational leaders, in fact, exhibit dimensions of a transactional leadership style, particularly in the area of contingency reward (CR), which actually contribute to their effectiveness. Nonetheless, it is the transformational orientation that demonstrates a leader's capacity to engage others in moral conversation; thus, it is an appropriate means to identify leader-persons most likely to be practitioners of moral discourse. However, given the ambiguities involved, and even though a candidate may have scored a minimum of 4.0 in the TF/TA spread, I looked at other factors in the candidate's MLQ composite in order to make a final decision whether or not to select the individual. Generally, I excluded candidates who had a very low CR score or one in excess of 1.0 above their TF score. Likewise, candidates with high laissez faire (LF) scores were also excluded. Those corollary factors in the MLQ scores are documented in Appendix F, along with my rationale for the final selection.

I also address limitations regarding Karp's (1997) Communitarian Survey and similar contingency factors used in assessing borderline K-com scores. Karp's instrument is based on a fundamental communitarian political assumption. When one looks at core values that shape how people generally align their political dispositions, the coordinates of that axis seem to be shifting. In the old typology, the political agenda was primarily interpreted in the context of the respective roles of the state versus that of the private economy. Karp suggests that the old dichotomy between liberals and conservatives was fueled by this former paradigm, but that it no longer conveys the

senses populorum . Rather, the primary core values that increasingly shape the political agenda are cultural and focus on normative commitments and moral values.

Karp based his research on the seminal work of Etzioni (1996) who postures that the new political axis is shaped by the polarity between the core values of liberty and social order. Those Americans who uphold liberty as their primary core value are classified as individualists. That grouping actually cuts across the old political dichotomy and brings together libertarians, laissez-faire conservatives, and civil libertarians. A second group, social conservatives, though traditionally linked with laissez faire conservatives, are a distinct group in Karp's typology. Rather than driven by the core value of liberty, political disposition of social conservatives places primacy on the need for social order and a willingness to rely on government to impose that order. Communitarians comprise the third group and seek to reduce the tension between the two by posturing a politics based on voluntary compliance to normative values that emerge as common ground within society.

Accordingly, Karp constructed his survey as a first empirical attempt to distinguish raters' political normative-value leanings around those three categories: individualist, social conservative, or communitarian. As such, it represents the only instrument I could find that assess communitarian orientation. Although its reliability and validity have not been established, and as Karp himself suggests, it nonetheless provides a baseline for future studies.

Like transformational leadership, my criteria for selection of candidates was based on the assumption that persons who are more clearly communitarian are more likely to be motivated and equipped to engage with others in constructive value-laden conversation that aims to surface the shared values of a given group. Thus, I am suggesting that a communitarian orientation reinforces a transformational leadership style because it legitimates moral reflectivity and has the effect of building the social

capital that sustains a commitment to a community ethos. In my conclusion, I suggest that the correlation between the two criteria, transformational leadership and communitarianism, is surely fodder for future research.

Karp's study found a high degree of consistency, with 81% of 792 respondents demonstrating a clear preference for one or another of the three orientations. Consistent was defined as meeting the following two criteria: (1) the respondent holds one position more often than either of the other two positions; (2) the respondent holds that position for at least six of the 15 items on the survey. Fifty-eight percent of Karp's respondents showed a clear communitarian preference, though many within that group showed leanings to either the individualist position or the social conservative position as their secondary position. By comparison, my sample of 63 respondents showed a remarkably higher communitarian orientation at 87%, using Karp' same criteria.[2] This suggests that the initial nomination process from the start of the screening process yielded a crop of prospective candidates that well reflected the targeted profile of leaders I was looking to engage. The pie chart in Figure 4 illustrates the individualist, social conservative, and communitarian orientation of the 63 respondents, as well as the respective secondary leanings of those who were communitarian.

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[2]Karp distinguished respondents who had a communitarian preference by grouping them by their leanings toward either the individualist or social conservative positions. To be classified as communitarian, the respondent needed to score at least 6 communitarian responses, and that score needed to be higher than scores in the individualist and social conservative categories. Those who met that criteria were further differentiated as: (1) Core Communitarians who had equal secondary scores in the individualist and social conservative categories; (2) Communitarians with an Individualist leaning, meaning their individualist score was higher than their social conservative score; and (3) Communitarians with a Social Conservative leaning, meaning their social conservative score was higher than their individualist score.

Figure 4.   Political orientation of 63 respondents.
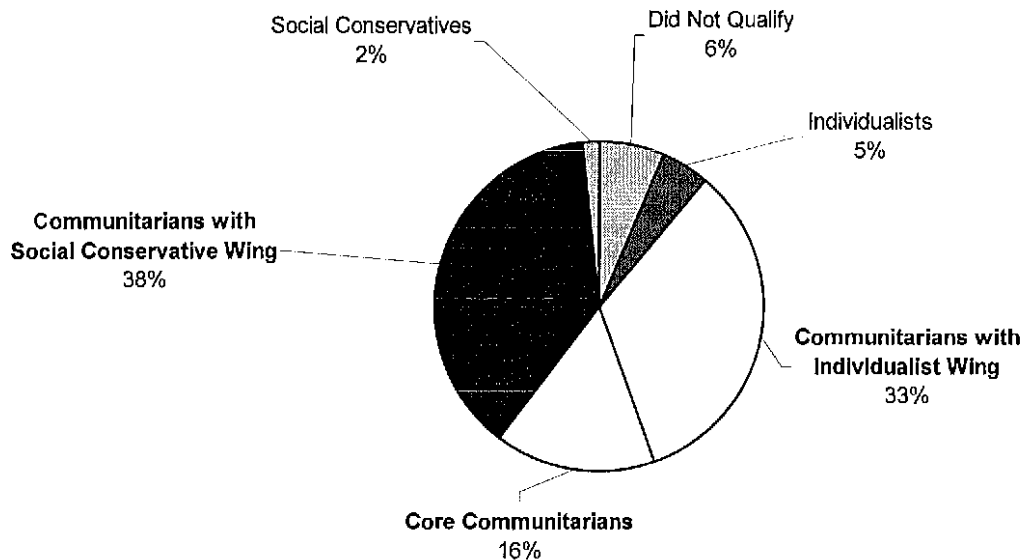
Beyond the primary and secondary selection criteria, the process of choosing

final participants was further constrained by the demands of last minute changes in the

candidates' availability. Six persons from the core group of 24 selected candidates were

unable to participate due to conflicts. Consequently, I resorted to the three next best

qualified candidates from my alternate list. This adjustment gave me a final total of 21

actual participants in focus groups. Each group was two and one-half hours in length,

and all were held at the University Center conference facility on the campus of the

University of North Florida.

Focus Group #1: April 19, 2001 - 7 participants
Focus Group #2: April 26, 2001 - 8 participants
Focus Group #3: April 30, 2001 - 6 participants

Data collection continued in the summer of 2001 and involved an hour-long

individual interview with fourteen persons at their respective workplaces. Ten of those

persons had previously participated in a focus group. Four additional interviews were

with persons who were among the original persons invited to the focus groups, but

whose schedule did not allow them to participate. In total, the study involved 25

participants. Twenty-one took part in a Focus Group session, ten of which also took part

in individual interviews. An additional four persons participated in the interviews only.

The TF/TA spread scores as well as the Communitarian K-Com scores of the 63

volunteers and the 25 actual participants are plotted in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5.   MLQ and K-Com scores of 63 respondents.
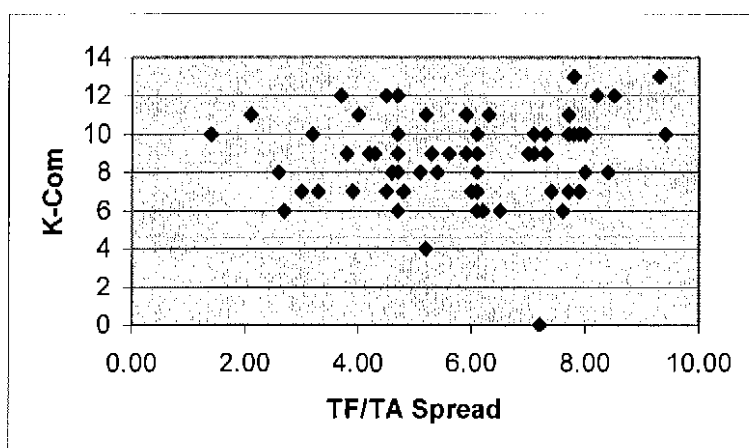
Figure 6.   MLQ and K-Com scores of 25 Actual participants.

109
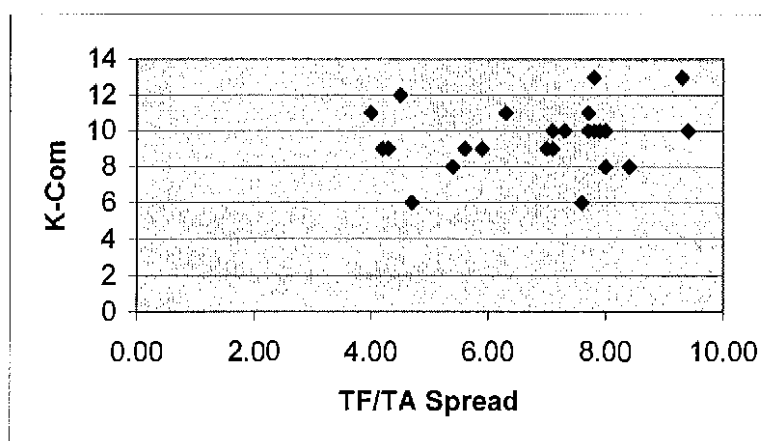
Finally, I document the demographic composition of the 25 participants of the study in order to demonstrate the efforts I took to strive for racial, age, and gender balance, as well as attempts to gain representation across a wide spectrum of organizational sectors. Those data are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1.   **Demographic Profile of all 25 Participants**

Focus Group Participants: 21 (10 were also in interviews)

Additional Interviewees not in the Focus Groups: <u>4</u>

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 25

<u>GENDER:</u>	<u>RACE</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>ORGANIZATIONAL SECTORS</u>
11 Female	7 Black	4 age 30-40	5 Education
14 Male	17 White	6 age 40-50	3 Health/Human Service Providers
	1 Other	15 age 50+	5 Philanthropy / Civic Organizations
			5 Business / Private Industry
			2 Media
			3 Religious Congregations
			2 Government / Public Sector

Specific Data Collection Procedures

I now discuss specific data collection procedures used in the focus groups and individual interviews. The interactive process of the focus groups made use of a discussion guide (Edmonds, 1999; Knodel, 1993; Krueger, 1993) that provided direction to the discussion and assured that the subject of inquiry was adequately addressed. I designed the discussion guide mindful of Krueger's (1993) recommendations that complex topics of inquiry be framed around relatively few questions. In all, there were nine main questions (see Appendix G) that framed the two-hour discussion period. In some cases, those questions subsumed several related probing questions.

I attempted to make the questions as concrete as possible and to design them in such a way as to move progressively toward a deeper focus on the main issues related to the research question. Following Krueger's model, the discussion guide began with an appropriate introduction and then moved into two low intensity questions that took the form of storytelling. From there, the process moved toward three transitional questions designed to unpack the content of those stories. The final phase involved two or three key questions that attempted to get the participants to interpret the significance of their experience vis-à-vis moral discourse and its relationship to social systems in workplace and society. The discussion came to closure with a summation question that invited participants to clarify, summarize, and validate the main ideas that come forth, thus serving as a means for member-checking. Serendipitous questions, when they surfaced, were put toward the end of the dialogue period to assure that the planned questions within the discussion guide were sufficiently addressed.

The opening storytelling questions proved to be particularly fertile and provided a means for the participants to develop a baseline of language and experience to frame the subsequent conversation. The stories gave context to the research question and cast the domain of inquiry for the rest of the session by providing settings, characterizations, themes, issues, and circumstances that framed the practice of moral conversation. They provided me a handle on what moral discourse looks like in the experience of the leader-participants, providing narratives of "verisimilitude" that facilitated vicarious experience and "a way of meaning-making" (Lincoln, 1989, p. 177).

In order to gain a greater richness of data, I chose to prompt the "storytelling" component of the focus group by administering a reflection exercise several days prior to the actual focus group session (see Appendix H). That exercise had the positive effect of helping the participants get on track with the discussion and to stimulate their thinking by helping them recollect relevant personal life experience. Lederman (1990) recommends

the use of such assigned activities in order to stimulate ideas among participants before they can be influenced by the initial comments of other members. It serves to make more productive use of time and minimizes the risk of a sequencing effect where, in the absence of one's own original ideas, respondents simply repeat what others have said. Zeller (1993) suggests that the administration of prompts creates reaction that is an asset, not a liability, and gets participants thinking about the issues before they arrive at the focus group session. The additional time to react before the session thus enhances the quality of the data and facilitates a greater depth of sharing. Where advance awareness of the topic might threaten validity of a survey or experiment, such prior awareness among focus group participants has the effect of stirring creative waters that percolate richer and more meaningful data.

The questions that followed the storytelling were framed in a way to help the participants draw deeper meaning of those stories. Repeatedly, participants made reference back to the stories told in the beginning of the sessions. Subsequent questions were purposely designed to be interpretive, broadly based and open-ended. I posed "what" and "how" questions as opposed to "why" questions, as the latter can be too ethereal and abstract. I was conscious of the need to assure that my questions were clear, were not overly technical, and avoided jargon. In carrying out the project, I did not presume the participants' knowledge or intellectual grasp of the theoretical suppositional frames of my inquiry. That is, I did not presume that participants had an intellectual understanding of concepts like transformational leadership, communitarianism, and discourse ethics. My aim was simply to elicit their reflection on their own experience as leaders vis-à-vis the practice of moral conversation. I simply facilitated a means for them to reflect on their own life stories in ways that helped them garner meaning by bringing to cognition their own tacit knowledge regarding those experiences.

The focus group design had previously been field tested in a pilot group of graduate students.[3] Those participants were, with one exception, all teachers in the public school system. Consequently, the dialogue process centered on the limited work settings of schools. I concluded that homogeneous groups comprised of participants in the same career setting would limit the breadth of data I was hoping to gain. As a consequence of that insight, I decided to construct the focus groups of the actual study in such a way included representation of across diverse organizational sectors.

Nonetheless, the pilot group allowed me to test the fertility of my questions in the discussion guide. That experience led me to reduce the number of questions, to edit others, and to change certain mechanical elements of the way I administered and facilitated the process. For instance, I discontinued my initial use of newsprint to record participants' responses as they shared their stories, concluding that it was distracting to the flow of the conversation, not necessary to the process, and put undue focus on the facilitator instead of the participants. I also worked in a longer hospitality session immediately prior to the actual commencement of the formal session, extended the dialogue period from 90 minutes to 120 minutes, and added a 10-minute break. But,

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[3] The pilot focus group was conducted on November 4, 2000. Participants were selected by a similar screening method set forth in my methodology, but the initial group of prospective participants were not nominated. Instead, they were solicited from a closed group of graduate students in the Educational Leadership program in the College of Education and Human Services at the University of North Florida. I administered the Participant Screening Questionnaire in three separate class sessions in the early Fall of 2000. Of the 44 graduate students surveyed, 27 volunteered to participate in the pilot focus group. From that group of 27 volunteers, and based on their survey responses, I selected 8 persons who best reflected the primary criteria defined by (1) transformational leadership style, and (2) communitarian political orientation. I also took steps to balance the group along racial, age, and gender lines. Two participants cancelled on the morning of the session, leaving a group of six who participated in the 90 minute process. I served as facilitator and was assisted by a colleague who handled the tape recording and other support functions. Immediately following adjournment of the session, I and the recorder participated in a 30 minute post-session debriefing. As I did months later in the real project, I transcribed the proceedings and did a dry run analysis of the pilot group data. However, I did not include the data of the pilot group in the database of the actual study presented here. The pilot focus group was a worthy learning experience. Most of all, it contributed to my confidence in the do ability of the project, the overall design of the discussion guide, and my own capacity as facilitator of the dialogue process.

most significantly, I was pleased with the general workability of the design, particularly the progression of the questions and the ease with which the initial "storytelling" questions facilitated a means for participants to focus upon concrete experiences that could stimulate the subsequent conversation.

Other procedural factors relative to the focus groups included site selection and equipment needs. I chose an appropriate neutral location, using the professional meeting facilities at the University Center of the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, Florida. The environment was safe, easy to find, and comfortable where people could be at ease and relax. Hospitality and welcoming was an integral component of the process. Each session included food and beverage service contracted with the conference center. The two morning sessions began with a 30 minute continental breakfast. The one evening session included a similar time for a light dinner meal. Participants sat around tables so that all participants were easily visible to one another. All proceedings were audio-taped. I opted not to make use of video tapes, as that practice has been increasing viewed as being intrusive (Krueger, 1993). The opening 15 minutes of each session began with an introduction about the purpose of the research and focus groups, rules of engagement to guide the dialogue process, and short introductions by each participant. As I moved through the nine questions, each was projected on a screen using computer generated slides.

As researcher, I functioned as the facilitator of the discussion. Montell's study (1999) demonstrates how the researcher's role as facilitator is a positive resource rather than a contaminant in the research process. The researcher's active and skillful engagement in the discourse stimulates processes that are empowering among the participants. In contrast with the informal setting of a purely naturalistic and phenomenological approach where the researcher is non-directive and passive, the more formal setting of focus groups calls for a more active role on the part of the

researcher. Through active listening and modeling by my own self disclosure (Zeller, 1993), I aimed to develop a trusting relationship with each participant. More than simply serving the mechanistic function of a moderator, the researcher serves as facilitator of an interactive process that moves and develops through the dialogue (Frey & Fontana, 1993). Accordingly, the researcher is more direct as an active and empathetic participant and one who exercises control over the direction of the communication process in order to keep the dialogue going and to keep the group on task. Further, as both researcher and facilitator, I am more likely to be in touch with the data, having had first hand experience of them, thus enhancing my capacity to do the subsequent data analysis. For that reason, the literature makes a strong case arguing that the focus group facilitator and the data analyst should be the same person (Krueger, 1994; Morgan & Krueger, 1993).

I also made use of an assistant facilitator who took field notes during the group sessions (Krueger, 1994). The assistant facilitator also ensured that audio tape-recording equipment worked properly and assisted in other support functions including supply needs and setup. The assistant facilitator did not participate in the discussion, but served as observer and note-taker recording elements of both verbal and nonverbal communication. Immediately following the closing of each of the three focus group sessions and after the departure of the participants, I and the assistant facilitator took 20-30 minutes to debrief each session, noting major themes, notable quotes and comparing and contrasting the data with that of previous groups. These debriefing sessions were also audio taped and provide the earliest record of preliminary data analysis.

After all three focus groups were conducted and transcribed, and following a first round of analysis of those data, I selected ten persons of the 21 who had participated in the focus groups and arranged to meet with them for one-hour individual follow-up

interviews. The selection of these interviewees was based on those persons who were particularly articulate and demonstrated a richness of perspective and experience related to the most salient themes and constructs that emerged during the focus groups. In addition, I arranged interviews with four other persons who, though selected for the focus groups, were unable to participate due to last minute scheduling conflicts. In all, I conducted 14 individual interviews in June and July of 2001. As in the case of my focus groups, I took a proactive approach that set high performance standards regarding my role as primary research instrument. I went into the interviews with a list of appropriate questions designed to further unpack the themes that surfaced in the focus groups. My interview style was active, conversational, and flexible as I strived to respond to situations with skill, tact, and understanding (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In designing the interview process, I purposefully steered it within a landscape of inquiry engaging the categories, themes, and issues that were central to the questions posed in the focus groups. New and unforeseen categories surfaced in the course of the individual interviews, thus prompting new questions as I worked my way through each interviewee. A list of sample questions asked in the individual interviews can be found in Appendix I. Primacy was placed on eliciting the voice of the interviewees, a process which required that I let loose of any predisposed research agenda in order to be open to new data when I saw it, but without loosing the focus and purposefulness of my research. As in the case of the focus groups, I made audio recordings and self-transcriptions of each interview. Mindful that early stages of data analysis coincide with the data collection process, I did on-going interpretation of the data as I went, noting my reactions, ideas, and stimulations in my research journals. I also maintained a field log of decisions and steps I took along the way as the database developed, as new questions surfaced, and as categories, themes, and constructs were identified.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

The process of analysis was recursive and ongoing, beginning during the stages of data collection and becoming more focused and synthetic as analysis moved through stages of data reduction. The earliest analysis began in the field and took the form of observation notes during the focus groups, memos in my research journal, the debriefings with the assistant facilitator following the conclusion of each focus group, and the construction of rough visual models, images, and schematics that captured salient metaphors, themes and concepts. Tacit analysis was surely an element of the meticulous process of hearing repeated playbacks of the audio tapes while I transcribed the proceedings of all three focus groups and fourteen interviews. Thus, the transcription process itself afforded me an early means to get my hands around the data and immerse myself in the personae of the participants.

More formal data analysis began once all the focus group transcripts were completed and prior to the individual interviews. Once I was able to conceptualize the main ideas that came out of the focus groups, I then designed relevant follow-up questions to further explicate those elements of the data via the interviews. I re-entered the field to conduct the individual interviews in the summer of 2001. Those interviews, prompted by the follow-up questions, were themselves exercises in data analysis as I shared with participants in processes of mutual meaning-making. The interviews were dialogical and conversational in tone. They afforded me the opportunity to test the validity of emerging constructs and themes through member checking with the experience of the interviewees.

Once the interviews were transcribed, I entered a new phase of data analysis. At times lost in a sea of transcripts and notes, I often felt overwhelmed as I struggled to manage and make sense of the range of data. I read through the complete set of transcripts two times while I used a notebook to record a preliminary listing of potential

codes that could map what seemed to be an endless list of disorganized concepts. At that point I began to develop primitive category lists and to formulate evolving matrixes that plotted elements of the data and linked categories into groups. Next, I read through all the transcriptions a third time while I entered codes in the margins. Shortly after, I left the analysis for nearly a month to revisit the methodology literature to gain renewed focus.

Data analysis was essentially synthetic and inductive as constructions were shaped into a meaningful whole as I interacted with respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 333). My aim was to extract meaning from the data, seeking to draw forth insight and understanding about the phenomenon of moral conversation and the way in which leaders engage others in practicing it. I eventually came to see that my analysis was both descriptive and interpretive. The descriptive component is the substance of Chapter Four, and enables readers to "see" the phenomenon of inquiry, perhaps even to participate vicariously in the experience of my research participants. The interpretive component is the substance of Chapter Five, where I attempt to provide context that explains, unwraps, and explicates the data in the context of the workplace and civil society.

My analysis utilized an inductive methodology drawing from several sources, but one that is based primarily on the rigor of the constant comparative method as originally postured by Glasser and Strauss (1967) and further explicated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1994). That process involved the formulation of categories and subcategories, repeated comparisons among those categories and sub-categories, and the development of mutually exclusive properties that define the categories. As I worked with categories I began to see connections with the literature. In other cases, I developed intellectual constructs of my own that served to frame the data, giving them meaning, context and form.

The naming of the categories and constructs came from several sources including the participants' descriptions of their experience, their interpretation of their experience, my own formulations about the data, as well as concepts that were validated in the literature review. The categories all relate to the research question, are mutually exclusive, exhaustive, sensitizing, and congruent (Merriam, 1998).

Initially, category construction began with a set of codes that corresponded to each major theme of the focus group discussion guide (Knodel, 1993). But over time, additional codes were developed as I began to see more complex relationships arising from generative themes that gave expression to the participants' understanding of their own experience (Padilla, 1993). These themes seemed to capture the cognitive orientation of participants as they began to understand the phenomenon of moral discourse in the context of their own experiences. Other categories served organizational and informational purposes that captured the images, metaphors, stories, profiles, and nonverbal messages of the participants. Some categories were phenomenologically descriptive and thus contributed to typologies of moral discourse venue, speech action, style, and function, while other categories were more explanatory and served as a means to interpret the data through the lenses of theory and practice. Eventually, the data was bound by mutually exclusive category constructs that delimited more than 1700 illustrative data chunks drawn from over 500 pages of verbatim transcriptions of focus groups and interviews. In the end, the category index (see Appendix J) comprised a list of distinct family groupings that provided a frame to present the findings of the study.

The formulation of the category index was a critical step in the overall process and was ongoing during the 6 months of formal data analysis that began in the Fall of 2001 and ended the following Spring of 2002. During that time I found myself continually reworking the categories in efforts to be reflective of what were the most salient

elements of the data. Category construction became a handle that greatly facilitated data reduction. While formulating that index, I defined the delimiting properties of each category that served as a means to assess inclusion or exclusion of data. The relationships among the categories eventually led me to organize them into family groups comprised of categories and their respective sub-categories. Over time, the categories and subcategories were compressed or otherwise expunged if judged to be not particularly salient. Along the way I developed the stories matrix (see Appendix K) and continued to write memos to myself drawing relationships among the categories. In many cases, those memos became topics and themes that eventually worked their way into the narrative.

Once the category index was in place, I constructed a computerized database to organize the data. I did a final rereading of all the transcripts, dropping data chunks into the respective categories of the database. This process greatly facilitated data reduction as well as a means to integrate my data with other sources besides the verbatim transcripts. Other sources included my own research memos, entries from my log journal, field notes, as well as notes from my extensive literature review files. Appendix L illustrates a sample comprehensive database category report, showing the category, its category family, property description, relevant data chunk citations, sources of the data, as well as related references to my literature notes and other research memos.

Finally, my data analysis addresses how I interfaced data with theory and moved beyond description into the realm of interpretation. As the data were organized, the integration of categories suggested theoretical constructs and ideas that gave meaning to the practice of moral discourse among leaders. I am careful to avoid the pretense of generating substantive theory, knowing that such a formidable process lies beyond the scope of this inquiry. Nonetheless, my findings serve to generate themes and

hypotheses that provide exploratory theoretical elements that can contribute to the further development of grounded theory.

I am mindful that the true tenets of the constant comparative method aim at the generation of theory and not the testing of previously identified theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). But to the extent that it contributes heuristic value, my analysis goes on to critique the findings through the interpretive screen of theories drawn from the related literature. That particularly comes into play in Chapter Five, where I address the implications of the research for theory and practice. Cronbach (1977, cited in Eisner, 1998, p. 95) suggests that theories, rather than being solely used to predict events, can appropriately serve as guides to perception in assessing data where there is a wide range of interactive relationships among categories and variables. By critiquing my findings through the lens of other theories, I make use of what Eisner (1991) calls a "heuristic conception of theory." This approach recognizes that theory is imbued with the ideal, but needs to be shaped to fit the particularity of practice. To that end, I concluded my analysis by interpreting the findings in light of several theories cited in my literature review, including transformational leadership theory, communitarian political thought, and discourse ethics. I did this not for the purpose of proving or disproving theory or to predict events, but to "satisfy rationality, to deepen the conversation, and to raise fresh questions" (Eisner, 1991, p. 95).

Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Concerns

To be valid, my methodology needs to assess what it proposes to assess, that is, how leaders engage their constituents in moral discourse. The findings need to demonstrate some perception regarding leaders' function as agents of moral conversation. Validity is first demonstrated on the face value of the data, that is, the believability of the participants' stories and interpretations regarding their stories. Secondly, the conceptual constructs of the data are validated through triangulation that

demonstrates structural collaboration across the three focus groups and the individual interviews. Thirdly, the narrative seems to hang together in a coherent fashion and in a way that demonstrates structural collaboration (Eisner, 1991).

Other steps that increase the study's validity included member-checking built into the final evaluative question in the focus groups, as well as the opportunity to test concepts with those who participated in the individual interviews (Morgan, 1993). Throughout the process, I maintained a research journal where I logged strategic and tactical decisions along the way and the reasons to justify those actions, thus assuring an adequate audit trail of the research.

I was mindful of potential threats to internal validity of focus group data that might result through certain group communication phenomena. Among those threats were responses based on social desirability, low levels of trust, face-politeness, and the impact of group dynamics, especially if there was an unequal distribution of power among participants. I took certain steps to minimize those potential problems. The reflection exercise administered prior to the focus group minimized the chance for group sequencing that might reinforce social desirability. There were occasions where the data would seem to suggest that one or another participant may have been influenced by social desirability. Nonetheless, participants were honest and straightforward, particularly in the context of the individual interviews. In several instances, when interviewed individually, participants were far more candid and revealing than they were in the group setting, thus substantially increasing the reliability of the data drawn from the individual interviews. To minimize the problems associated with unequal power in the focus groups, I attempted as much as possible to construct the focus groups with participants across organizational sectors, thus increasing the likelihood that participants would have little or no working knowledge of one another.

My role as facilitator of the focus groups raises some concerns that may jeopardize the internal validity of my data. But as stated previously, because focus groups are interactive events and highly participatory, there is less risk for research bias to influence the data. Nonetheless, I took steps to constrain my own influence within the focus groups by responding neutrally to the comments of participants and by using language free of jargon. Reliability of the data was also enhanced as the researcher himself was the facilitator in all three focus groups and all fourteen individual interviews.

I am mindful that generalizability is not the immediate purpose of qualitative research, nor can it be demonstrated by this kind of design. Donmoyer (1990) calls for new language to recast the notion of generalizability in ways that emphasize the significance of qualitative research. In a similar vein, Guba and Lincoln (1985) argue that standards of internal validity, generalizability, reliability and objectivity should be replaced with alternate criteria that are more appropriate to the utility, logic, and values of qualitative inquiry while still assuring its trustworthiness. For instance, demands for internal validity can be viewed as truth value and assessed in terms of the credibility of the data. In the case of external validity, rather than assessing the study's generalizability to a larger population, a more appropriate standard for qualitative inquiry is the applicability and transferability of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The point here is not to extend the findings to the larger population, but to unpack what is significant in the particularity of the experience of the participants in this study. It is the realm of particularity where qualitative study becomes heuristic in its capacity to extract meaning about phenomena.

Much of the data in this study has its basis in the proceedings of the focus groups. As such, the transferability of the of data can also be justified by the argumentation of Albrecht et al. (1993) who hold that group-formulated opinion is isomorphistic. Resonating the same idea, Yankelovich (1991) suggests that human

beings develop their moral and political opinions within group settings. Thus, it can be argued that the data of this study is likely to demonstrate similar structure to those of other individuals in the larger population who employ similar group dialogue processes. To that extent, the findings might be applied to subsequent quantitative research that utilize my constructs and categories. Thus, this study can contribute to a growing accumulation of knowledge, perhaps not in the sense of vertical accumulation, but rather along a horizontal continuum (Donmoyer, 1990) where knowledge expands in the complexity of a post-modern perception of social reality.

The aim of qualitative study is new insight, new meaning, and new concepts that can shape new theory and social constructs. The size of the sample is not as significant as the fact that new meaning has been discovered. It is not facts and predictability that I am after as much as value and meaning that can prompt new opportunity for learning. Concerns for traditional generalizability are offset with the learning that comes through grounded theory, the expansion of concepts, and the emergence of new ideas previously unaccounted for in the schema of neatly packaged quantitative variables (Eisner, 1991).

I am also cognizant of the ethical concerns that impact both technical and interpersonal dynamics of this study (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). A number of those have already been addressed such as the steps I took to assure informed consent and disclosure regarding the purposes of the study. Others included efforts to assure reasonable confidentiality including the use of pseudonyms to protect the identify of the participants. Throughout, participants were treated fairly and with trustworthiness in a way that viewed their relationship to the researcher not only as a participant, but also, to a certain extent, as a research-partner. I was also conscious of the need for reciprocity in managing the resources and entrée provided to me by NCCJ as well as the input of referral sources used to identify the initial pool of prospective participants. Finally, this

study was undertaken in accordance with the Ethical Standards of the American Education Research Association (AERA, 1992) and with the approval of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human and Animal Subjects at the University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida.

Other Limitations

In Chapter One I addressed inherent limitations associated with qualitative research and the risk of research bias, and earlier in this chapter I considered the limitations associated with my use of the MLQ and Karp Communitarian survey instruments to screen participants. At this point I wish to acknowledge other limitations associated with the research design.

The nomination process presumed that the nominators could put forth an initial crop of candidates who demonstrated transformational and communitarian orientations. Though I could not presume that nominators understood those categories, I made some attempt to focus their thinking in those veins by including a participant profile description on the nomination form. Thus, the criteria in that profile attempted to gear the nominators to put forth names of persons who were reflective of transformational leadership and communitarian orientations. But there can be no assurance that they did so. I also recognize that nominators themselves were drawn from elitist circles and likely nominated fairly high profile individuals in the community. Yet, there can be no presumption that such notoriety in itself constitutes conformity to my desired participant profile. I suggest elsewhere that other leaders appropriate for this study likely exist in less known circles and in lower levels of management within organizations.

In consideration of those limitations, I devised the participant screening questionnaire to further qualify the nominees. As previously mentioned, the results of that instrument demonstrated a fairly high transformational leadership and

communitarian orientation of the 63 prospective candidates who submitted the questionnaire. Still, the administration of the survey instrument proved to be a worthy means to tighten the screening process. In the end, I was confident that I had a group of 25 participants that fairly well reflected the desired profile I was seeking among the participants in the study.

Though the problem of sampling is often dismissed in qualitative designs, perhaps the most significant limitation of my methodology was the use of only three focus groups. Additional focus groups would likely enhance theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to a point where no new or relevant data comes forth in a given category. Such studies are more likely to formulate grounded theory where category development is more dense and the relationships among categories better established. Though Krueger (1994) recommends a minimum of three focus groups, his approach calls for homogeneous groups where participants, though unknown to one another, have similar life experience relevant to the subject of inquiry. Yet, in this study, because I was limited to three focus groups, I chose to make them diverse and representative of leaders' experience across a wide array of organizational types and sectors. Given the limited resources available for this study, my aim was to garner a wide breadth of data regarding leaders' practices of moral discourse in diverse organizational settings. But as the participants in my focus groups did not share similar organizational settings, their perceptions regarding the phenomenon of moral discourse might vary. For instance, the experience of leaders in religious organizations may be somewhat different from the experience of leaders in schools and those in private industry. In the case of such heterogeneous groups, Krueger's (1993, 1994) protocol would call for additional focus groups, as many as three for each break group comprised of a given organizational sector. For instance, a more thorough study would have called for three groups of

educators, three groups of health and human service providers, three groups of leaders from private industry, and so forth.

Finally, there were methodological limitations associated with the manner of selecting participants for individual interviews as well as shortcoming associated with the interview process. Among those were the selection of four interviewees who did not participate in the prior focus groups and did not have the context of that experience to draw from. With one exception, those interviews were not as substantial as those that involved the focus group participants. Yet, I made the decision to involve those four persons in order to increase participation of leaders from organizational sectors that were not sufficiently represented within the focus groups.

A related difficulty with the interviews was the progressive nature of the questioning. Although my questions in the focus groups were consistent, they were less so in the Individual interviews. In a number of cases, questions evolved as I went from one individual interview to the next and as new ideas came to the surface. Consequently, certain questions asked of interviewees in the final stages may not have been asked of some of the earlier interviewees. A more thorough study would have gone back to all the interviewees and asked the same questions. Also, a final synthesizing focus group comprised of a composite of all participants could have plumbed those questions with greater clarity. Such processes would have also provided additional triangulation of data through more extensive member checking.

These shortcomings of dissertation research reflect the limitations of time, human, and monetary resources. To the extent that future research can overcome them, it is likely that such research will produce a more complete and thorough database.

Chapter 4: PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Having put forth the methodology and procedures of the study, I now continue with the presentation of the data and the ensuing data analysis.The aim of this chapter is to present a descriptive analysis of the data collected through the focus groups and individual interviews. A significant part of that data centered on stories of specific moral conversations as told by the participants. See Appendix M for two sample story narratives and Appendix K for the stories matrix. The database also included the participants' reflections as they were prompted by those stories and as they attempted to give meaning to their life experience as leaders vis-à-vis their practice of moral discourse.

Using processes of data analysis discussed in my methodology, I identified approximately 200 mutually exclusive categories and subcategories that give shape and substance to the complexities of the phenomenon of moral discourse. I then compressed those categories and subcategories into eight major family groups (Appendix J). Five of those frame the five sections of Chapter Four. The remaining are the focus of Chapter Five. My construction of the five themes described in this chapter represent the most salient elements of a descriptive analysis of the phenomenon of moral discourse and how leaders practice it. Those themes are: (1) Venues of the Conversation; (2) Impediments to the Conversation; (3) Stimulants to the Conversation; (4) Speech Action, Style & Function; and (5) Leaders' Practices. In Chapter Five I shift to a more interpretive analysis that situates transformational leadership and the practice of moral discourse within the contexts of the workplace and civil society and the implications for theory and practice therein.

Venues of the Conversation

Venues are the frames that give shape and context to the experience of public moral conversation.   From the Latin venire, a venue is "the coming, the arrival, the approach, site, scene, setting, spot, location, place." Without venue, there is no prospect for conversation. The venue frames the particularity of circumstances that precipitate the conversation, giving it place and context. My analysis leads me to see the venue as the interface of four elements that were contained in all the stories described by the participants (see Figure 7). I am suggesting that those elements define the venue, and when all are present, the venue constitutes a forum for a particular moral conversation. The four elements are: Arena, Issue, Event, and Value(s). Those descriptive elements are prompted by the following four questions:

1. In what social setting does the conversation occur? (Arena)

2. What temporal circumstance prompts the conversation? (Event)

3. What is the conversation about? (Issue)

4. What underlying values and beliefs motivate the speaker? (Values)

Figure 7.   Components of the Venue.
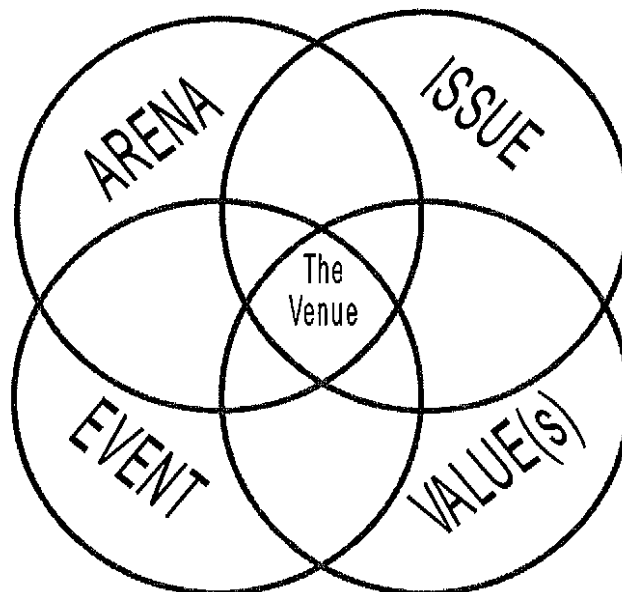
The Arenas of Moral Conversation

The Arena is the social setting where the conversation takes place. I identified

four arenas that move through a continuum from the private sphere to the public sphere:

(1) friends and family; (2) the workplace; (3) civil society; and (4) formal political bodies.

The first arena can be viewed as a private sphere, but the others occur in the public

sphere and constitute the particular focus of this study. The continuum fits well with

Habermas' distinction between weak and strong publics (Baynes, 1995).[4]

Moral Discourse in the arena of friends and family is typically conversation that

occurs in informal settings such as dinner conversation, spontaneous living room

discussions, and conversation with neighbors during a "walk around the block," "in the

local tavern," or "on the porch." Such conversation generally lacks a formal

organizational context. Its base is private life, and many of those conversations have

family life overtones. A number of participants described intimate moral conversations

with their spouses and close friends. For instance, Debbie talked about confiding in her

husband about a values conflict she was experiencing in the workplace. For various

reasons, she chose not to raise the discourse at work but did so with her husband. Larry

described his struggle as to whether or not to engage his teenage sons in a conversation

about their squabbles and fighting habits. Elli believes responsible parenting is a context

for practicing moral discourse as well as a means to educate children how to do it. "My

kids and I," she said, "talk about just the darndest things, the issues of the day. They are

very in tune with what is going on in the world." And Eric described a conversation with

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[4] Habermas' approach suggests two publics, "weak publics" and "strong publics." The former constitute the informally organized public sphere ranging from private associations to the mass media, while strong publics are the formalized legislative and parliamentary bodies of political systems. Baynes (1995, p. 217) asserts that weak publics are pivotal to the process of identifying and interpreting social (moral) problems and issues and the ensuing public opinion around those concerns. Weak publics are precisely the domain of civil society, akin to my Arena 2 (workplace) and Arena 3 (organizations that comprise civil society). For purposes of this study, "public" means primarily "weak publics," not to be confused with formal political institutions (Arena 4).

his daughter's English literature teacher, where he challenged the teacher to scrutinize assumptions about students and change his teaching style. Though it took place in a school setting and might thus be viewed as civil society, the conversation emanated from Eric's personal life and his sense of responsibility as a parent. It could be public, if he brought the issue to a public forum such as the Parent-Teacher's Association (PTA) or School Advisory Committee (SAC). But at the level he described the story, I categorized the discourse as conversation in the private sphere of friends and family life.

It is apparent that the private sphere constitutes a relatively "safe place" to talk about issues that have moral import. But there is also a tendency to see moral discourse as appropriate only in those private settings. In one particular focus group, the discussion about moral discourse in personal and family life seemed to be a springboard to reflect about moral discourse in more public arenas such as the workplace and civil society. If there is some reticence to have those conversations in public, it may be helpful for persons to reflect on their experience in the private sphere and learn to transfer those dynamics into more public arenas.

The second arena is the workplace. It constitutes formal or informal values conversation among colleagues in workplace settings. The workplace is increasingly a primary community for many Americans, offsetting the demise of neighborhoods (Wuthnow, 1998). Workplace scenarios, by far, represented the most frequent arena for the stories of moral conversation described by the participants in this study (see Appendix N).

George, an assistant editor, described his efforts to encourage his colleagues on the newspaper's managerial staff to declare Martin Luther King day a paid holiday. He successfully persuaded them on the grounds that such policy would reflect the progressive values of the newspaper's editorial stance and its support for human rights. Cindy addressed the objections raised by members of her staff at the Housing

Partnership Coalition who questioned the agency's policy of affirmative action in support of minority contractors. Marsha spoke out at a high level management meeting regarding unspoken value-laden issues that she believed were being ignored by the chief executive officer of the large insurance company for which she worked.

The stories go on. Donna tells the story of the time she harbored feelings of mistrust about her agency's national reorganization plans. She found herself "biting her tongue" during a national meeting. Eventually she and others, in a floodgate effect, expressed their concerns publicly at the meeting, but only after someone else first had the courage to speak out and express "what most everyone else was feeling." Ray, vice president for external affairs of a telecommunications company, told me about the time he was in a meeting with a team of consultants and other managers of his company and how he raised objections to the company's plan to carryout a major corporate downsizing, saying: "We haven't brought our people along to be treated this way, nor would we want to be treated this way. We are missing the basic, fundamental common courtesies of what this corporation was built on." David took time out of his busy day as a high school principal to respond to the concerns of a white female student who walked into his office in near tears, reacting to the school's observance of Black History month, saying she is "sick and tired of being blamed for what's happening to black people." Brian, a public affairs director for a university, expresses his concern for the need to be inclusive of diverse religious traditions as his department makes a plan for the staff's annual holiday party. And Peggy, the executive director of an environmental education center, reminded her board of the dangers of chasing grant dollars for projects that are not sufficiently aligned with the agency's mission. Each of these scenarios are illustrative of the many and diverse ways in which values talk enters the discourse of the workplace.

The third arena is that of civil society, comprised of the many and varied social communities formed by the organizations that define our daily lives. They include

schools and their related organizations like PTAs and SACs, as well as social interactions with groups affiliated with religious institutions, churches, mosques, and synagogues. Other contexts of the civil society arena include civic organizations, fraternal and community service clubs like Rotary and Civitan, neighborhood homeowner associations, arts and recreational groups, grassroots political advocacy organizations, and self-help groups that have mushroomed over the last 30 years. Illustrative of them is a group formed by Tim and his wife that meets each Wednesday evening in their home to talk about personal mission and how to seek alignment between one's deepest values and one's work and professional life. Tim described this forum for values conversation as "a place to create some safer space to be able to share the moral discourse, and to be able to dialogue about it ... and so I call it, almost, a semi-public space."

Such groups comprise the numerous "intermediary associations" that Tocqueville (1835) described as the bedrock of American democracy . They are the places and events where Americans participate in local communities, shaping and forming the public opinion that impacts social policy. At a gathering of a church study group, Dan expressed his belief that poverty in inner city Detroit was the single largest factor that contributes to racial tension in that city. Herb talked about the time he served as President of the Chamber of Commerce and successfully motivated the Chamber to develop a values statement that affirmed the dignity of all persons at a time when the city was torn by racial slurs made by a prominent Judge. Sarah, who sits on the board of her synagogue, described her anger at a recent meeting of the board when "a very powerful, wealthy, and vocal gentleman" suggested that there was a need to control growth in membership by excluding persons who lived beyond a certain distance from the synagogue. She believed the practice would unfairly exclude persons who had no local synagogue in their own immediate community. In different focus groups, Fran and Jacob each spoke passionately about their similar experience in a small but diverse

group of persons who met regularly to explore attitudes regarding the sensitive area of race relations.

The moral discourse that occurs within civil society provides fertile context for citizen involvement in genuine forms of participatory democracy. In that arena, citizens' discourse gives shape to the development of public opinion that informs the development of public policy. The latter process is the heart of the moral civic discourse carried out in the fourth arena of formal political deliberative bodies. There, the engagement is with and among public governmental bodies and their agents, involving elected or appointed officials, using prescribed protocols for the purpose of defining, assessing, and implementing public policy. Examples include public moral discourse at town meetings, school board meetings, public hearings, the discourse of legislative entities, and the judicial review of courtroom proceedings.

Though less frequent in the database, examples of this arena were evident. Cindy participated in the mayor's town meetings for the purpose of advocating on behalf of an economically depressed neighborhood. She spoke with passion and conviction as one who had grown up in the neighborhood and returned years later to find it deteriorated. Elli and Patricia, who each served on the county school board, shared stories that described their attempts to engage other board members as well as the general public in values talk on controversial issues including sex education, prayer at graduation, and desegregation. And Ryan, a recently retired Naval officer, talked about constraints on his capacity to express his political beliefs during active military service.

Looking back upon the four arenas, two things stand out. First, certain topics of discourse tend to be confined to one or another arena of conversation. For instance, much of the discourse among friends and families is centered on personal matters such as family life and parenting concerns; but these issues have limited impact on public social policy which is more the focus of discourse within civil society and political bodies.

Similarly, in the workplace, moral conversation is often limited to categories and situational contexts immediately relevant to workplace ethics and business protocol. Personal and family issues are often deemed inappropriate to talk about in the workplace, though some participants saw them as relevant if the personal issue was seen as impacting work performance. Social policy, social ethics, religion, and politics, all of which are themes that bear more directly on discourse within civil society, are also typically viewed as inappropriate in the workplace, unless those issues directly relate to the organization's mission. Likewise, in civil society, participants tend to avoid personal and family matters, though those concerns can become springboards to wider discourse in the public sphere.

Secondly, and as a counterpoint to the above, the moral conversation can overlap arenas. For instance, the gathering of friends who meet weekly in Tim's living room has a more formalized organizational context than that of a simple informal chat among friends. There is a distinct purposefulness to the gathering that shifts the arena from the private sphere to at least a more semi-public sphere, which makes the arena appropriately described as an expression of civil society. This cross-over is evident in a story that Tim told about the time he advocated with members of the School Advisory Committee (SAC) concerning the school board's planned cutback of a bilingual program in his daughter's elementary school. His initial motivation arose in the context of family life and began with a moral conversation with his spouse regarding their mutual parenting concern for their adopted Hispanic daughter. Though the conversation emanated in the context of his own family and private life, by bringing it before the SAC, he shifted the discourse into the arena of civil society. Had he chosen to further pursue the matter, he might have expressed his value sentiments more formally before the school board, which would have shifted the discourse into the formal public arena of a political body.

Given that this research is focused on how leaders engage others in <u>public</u> moral conversation, I will particularly focus upon the three arenas that have public import. In Chapter Five, I address those dynamics when I consider the application of moral discourse in the context of the workplace, civic society, and democracy.

<u>The Temporal Event of the Venue</u>

A second component that shapes the venue of moral discourse is the temporal circumstance that prompts the conversation. In this sense, the conversation takes places at a given moment in time, which I call the event. The event is temporally defined by the physical circumstances where actors find themselves faced with the opportunity to express their beliefs, values, and sentiments regarding a particular matter. The event is the existential moment of the discourse. The data demonstrated three kinds of such temporal settings: situational events, intentional events and serendipitous events.

By far, the most prevalent events are situational in that they occur in the context of a formal gathering or meeting convened for the purpose of addressing a specific agenda or resolving a particular problem requiring a decision impacting a subsequent action. As such, situational events are task driven and often surface in the context of an established group such as a management work team. The focus of the discourse centers on issues that relate directly to the group's function, purpose, or mission. A context might be a staff meeting where a moral conversation ensues in the course of discussing an item on the agenda. Participants are faced with the urgency to act or to make a decision in order to resolve a problem. Moral discourse in situational events informs the impending decision and points to a subsequent action.

Many of the participants' stories described workplace situational events. At a planning session for the annual Earth Day celebration, Peggy struggled with the committee over the challenge of how best to incorporate an inclusive public prayer in the program design. Chuck voiced his objection at a meeting of principals when he found the

conversation shifting into a verbal assault on the another principal not present to defend himself. George's discourse about honoring the Martin Luther King holiday day, Cindy's response to her colleagues concerns about minority contractors, and Ray's objections to his company's plan to downsize were all examples of situational events where the moral conversation emanated from a problem or issue faced by the group and directly related to the group's function. In each case, the discourse was practical, relevant to the organization's function, and perceived as urgent.

But situational events occur in other arenas besides the workplace. Carol talked about her unsuccessful efforts to influence the school officials regarding her daughter's social promotion into high school. Patricia injected moral discourse into the situational event of a school board meeting as she spoke empathically and in solidarity with several teachers who were victimized by sexual harassment. In each case, the context of the discourse was immediately relevant to a situation or problem at hand, regardless of whether or not the discourse successfully impacted the impending decision.

By contrast, moral discourse in an intentional event is different because the participants purposefully and voluntarily engage values talk as a means to think critically about matters to which they voluntarily commit their time and energy, and in a context where they are generally free from an immediate urgency to act. The focus of the discourse is more deliberate and often more conceptual. Consequently, it is not so bound by rules of protocol and expediency. The gathering is purposefully morally reflective because it is specifically designed to talk about a meaningful substantive issue or concept that has moral import and shapes the participants' consciousness. Accordingly, the context is often more intimate, creative, free flowing, and an occasion for personal growth and development. Tim's Wednesday night "personal mission" group that meets in his living room is illustrative of an intentional event, where "smaller groups of people can have confidence with each other ...[and] where ideas get percolated."

Cindy captured well the voluntary dimension of an intentional moral conversation in her experience as a participant in a study circle on race relations.

> When we start to talk about things in an environment such as the study circles ... I think for people to actually involve themselves in those moral types of conversation, they have to want to be there ... to have some type of desire there to do it. ... More times than not, it happens in a controlled environment where the whole mission is to come together and to talk about those things ...

What makes the conversation intentional is its explicit purposefulness from the outset. In some cases, participants develop close bonding as a result of their shared discourse. Intentional events are most likely to occur in planned, contrived settings that are designed as learning experiences and that specifically create the open and safe space for values talk. Settings might include retreats, seminars and workshops, study groups, and some classroom discussions. Steve, an administrator at a local community college, also teaches a class on World Religions where he engaged his students in a conversation about universal core values common to all faiths. Eric, a media personality known in the community as a consumer advocate, was invited to speak before the local Automobile Retailers Association for the purpose of motivating sales consultants to think about honesty and ethics in their selling practices. In Steve's classroom and in Eric's presentation to car sales associates, the discourse was purposefully defined by a value-laden agenda, and participants gathered knowing that they would have the opportunity to engage in moral reflectivity.

These same dynamics can manifest themselves in workplaces that allow for open spaces of conversation freed from the demands of a prescribed agenda. Donna creates the open space for stimulating values talk during the first few minutes of her weekly staff meetings. She does this by inviting staff members to read parts of the daily newspaper and then asks them to suggest applications to particular work contexts within the organization. Larry, executive director of a community foundation, prepares occasional "white papers" to stimulate reflective conversation among his board as a

means to nurture values formation that can inform subsequent situational events. He says this:

> I try to think ahead, to prepare ahead. And so ... I write white papers. And I plant these white papers or I try to play at [intentional] conversations ... or I'll ask for the opportunity to make a brief presentation as part of a committee or a board meeting, about a particular issue. And it's sort of, FYI or "here's an interesting observation" ... and I then do those in sequential fashion, so that when we finally get to what I know is going to be the [situational] conversation, the folks have a background or perspective.

These kinds of "open spaces" at meetings, as well as staff development retreats, mission statement exercises, and communications training workshops can all provide settings for intentional moral discourse. But there appears to be a potential downside of intentional events. As rich as those experiences can be, the conversation risks being short-changed as something that is simply academic, personally enriching, or theoretical, with little assurance that the discourse will have application to real life situations and the demands of the day-to-day workplace. Joe, a Unitarian minister, makes this point when he says:

> Sometimes very exciting things happen in workshop formats or study circles, or this kind of thing. Our congregation went through it ... my wife is part of the ongoing ecumenical study circle ... so I believe in it very much ... But, part of what I find disappointing about those is that sometimes they happen, and that's the end.

A third temporal context for moral conversation occurs in the spontaneity of serendipitous events. This category represents the incidental conversation of idle moral chat that comes up in "small talk" in numerous settings. Such talk is not evidently purposeful, presumes no commitment among the participants, nor has organizational structure. This type of conversation is most evident in private informal conversation in the arena of friends and family. But it can also be evidenced in the workplace over the water cooler, the coffee pot, or in the lunch room. In some cases, it may be prompted by news of the day, current events, particularly national media events that galvanize the soul of the nation. Though it occurred shortly after data collection for this study

terminated, a particularly illustrative case in point were the countless value-laden

conversations precipitated by the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Other

examples are highly visible incidents that involve national celebrities, as illustrated in

Debbie's story about her reaction to the verdict of the O.J. Simpson trial of 1996.

Peggy told a story about a conversation she had with colleagues in the lunch

room at her workplace. "I started [to say], 'Well, did you see the news?' And everyone

started talking about what had happened. Suddenly I shared a story about something

that had happened to me." Sarah described a spontaneous conversation with a stranger

about the demands of parenting, while standing on line to enter a museum. In the course

of the conversation, she discovered that the stranger, like her, was an educator and that

they had similar values. And David tells a story of spontaneous values talk when he says

to a colleague, "Gee whiz, did you see on the news today that thus and so ..." And

again, he and a close friend go to a movie, "and there is something in the movie that

strikes in a chord, and then leads to another conversation."

Like the arenas of discourse, the time events can be fluid and should not be seen

as rigid, though the conceptual categories are mutually exclusive. The conversation can

float across events and shape subsequent discourse. Intentional conversations can

surely influence concrete circumstances that may later arise in situational events, as was

the case of Larry's "white papers." Situational events can provide fodder for critical

reflection in intentional events. And serendipitous discourse, like that around the water

cooler, can surely give shape to a situational discourse held later in the boardroom.

When interfaced, the categories of Arena and Event create a matrix of specific

forums for moral conversation. Accordingly, Table 2 illustrates up to 12 potential forums

for moral discourse, based on the matrix of forum stories as described in Appendix N.

Table 2.   <u>**Forums of Moral Conversation**</u>

	Arena 1 Friends/Family	Arena 2 Workplace	Arena 3 Civil Society	Arena 4 Political Bodies

A
 	
Situational
Events
	1A
	Values talk w/family members or friends that address specific issues and problems needing some form of action or resolution;
	e.g.
	#17 Debbie
	    w/husband;
	#20 Larry w/sons;
		2A
		Values talk in the context of business matters, problems & issues that arise in the workplace & directly relate to organizational function and mission.
		e.g.
		#27 David/Principal
		    Mtg;
		#37 Ray
		    w/Consultants;
			3A
			Values talk in citizen groups where participants voluntarily address specific problems having public import;
			e.g.
			#12 Herb/Judge &
			    the Chamber of
			    Commerce;
			#18/45 Sarah/ Mtg
			    at synagogue;
				4A
				Moral conversation that arises in the formal deliberative proceedings of political bodies in the course of deciding public policy;
				e.g.
				#14 Elli / School
				    Board ;
				#36 Ryan / City
				    Council;

B
 	
Intentional
Events
	1B
	Values talk where folks purposefully gather for informal substantive discourse; no urgency to act; no specific problem to resolve;
	e.g.
	#55 Tim/Sunday
	    Dinners;
	#56 Patricia &
	    "Crazy
	    Eights;"
		2B
		Purposeful values talk in more open space workplaces; not constrained by tasks that must be performed; more conceptual than practical; typically takes the form of retreats, workshops, & deliberate practices that stimulate organizational learning. e.g.
		#48 Patricia/Staff
		    Retreat;
		#50 Tim/UW ExDir
		    Support Grp;
			3B
			Values talk in civil institutional groups where participants purposefully address conceptual issues and ideas that influence public opinion, often with collateral affect of building community and social capital;
			e.g.
			#4 Fran /Study
			    Circle;
			#59 Lisa/Citizen
			    think tank group;
				4B
				Values talk involving public officials in less formal settings that allow for exchange of conceptual values freed from the need to make immediate policy decisions.
				#51 Patricia /
				    School Board
				    Retreat;
				#53 Elli/
				conversation with fellow school board member;

C
 	
Serendipitous
Events
	1C
	Spontaneous values talk in informal social gatherings of friends and families such as backyard bar-b-ques and spousal "pillow talk;"
	e.g.
	#29 Brian/dinner
	    party;
	#57 Tim/ Picnics;
		3C
		Unplanned informal moral chat that arises in conversations in the hallway, the lunch room or over the water cooler; may be related to personal issues, work issues, current events.
		e.g.
		#1 Peggy in
		    the Lunch Room
			3C
			Conversations in "third places" (Oldenburg, 2001) that create semi-public places for casual and spontaneous talk among citizens about values and beliefs, such as taverns, & coffee shops. e.g.
			#51 Sarah/Museum
				4C
				
				Not Evident

The Issue and Underlying Value(s) that Drive the Discourse

The issue and underlying value(s) are the third and fourth elements that define the venue of the conversation and are fairly simple and straightforward. Both are essential if the conversation is to have moral import. The issue answers the question: What is the conversation about? Its focus is about a topic, a problem, a concern that evokes a consideration of not only the facts of the matter, but also the non-rational elements of sentiment, values, and beliefs. Issue and value(s) are inextricably linked to avoid a fact/value split that can short circuit the moral discourse, as I discuss later in the section on impediments to the conversation. For the issue to have moral import and be suitable subject matter for public values talk, it must be sufficiently important, relevant to the life experience of the participants, elicit a sense of urgency, and have pubic import. But, if the conversation is to be morally reflective, the consideration of the issue must also allow participants to speak to it by expressing their underlying core values.

Brian explained how those factors came into play as he reflected on the time he spoke out at a workplace meeting charged with the task of planning the annual holiday party. He was concerned that the plans were proceeding for a traditional "Christmas" party (issue) without regard to the religious diversity (value) of the staff and faculty which included Jews and Moslems. Eventually, he spoke out and his speech action changed the subsequent conversation that led to a revamping of the plans, resulting in a more religiously diverse holiday party. He described the struggle in his own mind that finally led him to speak out.

> I am sitting toward the back of the room, listening to all these plans, and it was obviously a very Christian party was being planned ... a Christmas tree, going on and on ...and I am just sitting there for about a half hour ... just dying to say, "look, we are inviting students to this, we are inviting faculty, and by the way, we just got out of a lawsuit in which the University was accused of doing some discriminatory things against a Jewish professor." Is it important that I bring up this issue in a moral conversation? Is it important to me? Is this an issue that really needs to come out? ... [is it] going to hurt somebody? ...or is there a justice issue involved with this coming out? ... is it important that I make the

stand? ... and is it important that I make it? ...if I don't do it, nobody else will ... so, I am sitting there the whole time, and finally, you know, the meeting was about to wrap up, and I thought, nobody else was going to mention this, so I finally stood up and acted on it.

The significance of the issue is generally seen in terms of its timeliness and relevancy, perhaps prompted by a news story or other stimulant that communicates the "sign of the times" grounded in the cultural, political and historical context of the participants' social reality. Several participants told stories centered on national and local current events at the time of the data collection, for instance, the execution of the Oklahoma City bomber, Timothy McVeigh, and a controversy over the school board's much publicized handling of a bus contract. Cindy brought the issue of an economically depressed neighborhood before the Mayor's town meeting. Herb engaged the judge over the matter of the latter's public racist remarks that caused outrage in the community. Chuck spoke out at a principals' meeting in the presence of the superintendent, citing the problem of inequitable resources available to inner-city schools. Fran's conversation in the study circle addressed the issue of racism. Peggy's lunch room conversation was prompted by a news event about sexual harassment in the workplace. And Jacob participated in values talk with other citizens who came together in a task force to address the risk factors that contribute to the problem of juvenile crime.

All these issues are deemed important, but they also evoke the values and beliefs of the participants. Each story demonstrated a contextual value that went beyond simply the factual content of the issues involved. Each engaged the participants' belief systems in ways that motivated their involvement in the conversation. Eric, the consumer advocate who addressed the automobile retailers association, believed that customers should be treated fairly and honestly. Lisa, Sarah and Joe each told stories that revealed their core value for inclusivity that respects diversity and the freedom and dignity all persons. Debbie described a "conscience problem" as she sought to reconcile

workplace political values with her own sense of what is right and wrong. Ryan talked about the values of "honor, courage, and commitment" that were central to his experience in the military and that he wants to bring into his new position as a vice president in private industry.

Elli tries to convey her fundamental core values in conversations with her daughters, when she said, "One is don't lie ... honesty is huge with me. And the other is don't hit." Marsha, now retired from a large insurance firm, served for many years in management and was driven by a core value that underscored the self worth of women in the workforce at a time when women's leadership in management was not as validated as it is today. And Chuck underscored his fundamental belief in the values of participatory management as he attempts to reconstruct the organizational culture of a low performing inner-city high school

To summarize this section, a moral conversation takes places in specific forums formed by the intersection of an arena and a temporal event. Further, the conversations must be informed by a topic or issue of inquiry and allow for the expression of underlying values and belief systems which qualitatively shape the speaker's participation in the discourse. Together, these four elements provide a specific context for recognizing a scenario for moral discourse. But how the conversation plays out, and the success to which it effectively enables the participants to construct meaning, depends on a host of individual, social, cultural and communicative dynamics that characterize the conversation. Those dynamics function as either impediments or stimulants to the conversation. And to those dynamics, I now address myself.

Impediments to the Conversation

To deepen understanding, I want to investigate particular behaviors, dispositions and motivations of persons who engage or chose not to engage in moral conversation in

a given venue. The question that drives the next two category families is this: What are the behaviors, motivations, and dispositions that either impede or stimulate the conversation? They are the dynamics that either make moral discourse possible or thwart it. Those dynamics can positively or negatively influence the quality of the conversation. If they are negative, I call them "impediments;" if they are positive, I call them "stimulants" to the conversation.

Whether they be impediments or stimulants, my analysis distinguishes between individual dynamics and social dynamics. Individual dynamics center on the participant's own dispositions, life experience and speech actions that impact the quality of the conversation. Those factors may include self interests, knowledge base, belief systems, core values, assumptions, fears and anxieties. My typology makes a further distinction between passive and active individual impediments. A passive impediment is something that inhibits one from speaking out in the first place and acts to deter one's initiation of a values conversation. I think of these as indicators of "missed opportunities" for substantive values talk. What is significant is that the conversation did not happen. Passive impediments tend to be dynamics "internal" to the individual's experience and psychological state that serve to prevent the person from expressing his or her beliefs and values. Examples of passive individual impediments include feelings of a lack of efficacy, fears, and self doubt. On the other hand, an active individual impediment is something that in fact happens. A speech action occurs, intended or not, that is perceived by the other in such a way that it deters the other from further engagement in the conversation. For instance, one might make a prejudicial statement and the other responds by choosing to withdraw. Or, the other responds by becoming alienated or getting overly emotional to the degree that it stops the genuine dialogue. Passive individual impediments are dispositions of the self that deter the self, while active impediments are dispositions or actions carried out by the self that deter the other.

In contrast to factors brought on by the individuals in the conversation, there are a number of social and cultural dynamics that involve more external, environmental, relational and communicative factors that influence the quality of the conversation and condition the prospect for meaningful values discourse. Again, these factors can either positively influence the quality of the conversation (stimulants) or detract from it (impediments). They might include such notions as the dominant cultural discourse, variable cultural and historical predispositions, social capital, degree of trust, tolerance factor, community identification, and the quality of the communication process itself.

In the case of impediments, my typology resonates somewhat with Bird's (1996) description of "underlying causes" for moral silence and blindness. Bird delineates between individual factors, cultural factors and organizational factors. His first two categories resonate well with my own notions of individual and social/cultural dynamics, whereas his third category on organizational factors is reflected in Chapter Five where I frame the dynamics of moral discourse in the context of the workplace and organizational culture. Regardless of their classification, all the impediments demonstrate negative impacts that inhibit, impede, deter, or otherwise diminish the prospect for meaningful substantive moral conversation. In some cases, they prevent the conversation from beginning in the first place (passive) while in other scenarios they act as breaking mechanisms that cause a conversational breakdown (active).

Individual Impediments

A review of the transcripts of focus groups and interviews revealed numerous obstacles that individuals can bring to the venue that act to diminish the substance and quality of the conversation. Some of these are drawn from participants' stories and anecdotes while others reflect the participants' perceptions about their experience of doing moral discourse.

Generally speaking I found that participants were more able to talk about the negative dynamics impacting moral discourse than they could the positive. None had problems thinking of times when one would "bite your tongue" and withhold values talk despite having the opportunity to do so. The most significant individual impediments were: (1) lack of self efficacy; (2) self aggrandizing attitudes; (3) false assumptions about others' beliefs; (4) fears of hurting others and oneself; (5) self doubt; and (6) lack of knowledge and past experience.

By far, the most pervasive impediment in the data is the perceived sense of a lack of self efficacy. Numerous leaders described circumstances where they withheld from engaging values talk out of a sense of hopelessness and a lack of efficacy. This sentiment was reflected in feelings that people and systems seldom change and that despite one's best effort, one is not likely to have an impact and effect change. Central to this dynamic is a concern that one risks expending emotional and intellectual capital with little to show for it. The engagement is judged to be simply not worth the cost. Worse, one's emotional capital can be depleted to the point of burnout and complacency. Participants spoke metaphorically about having to "choose my battles," avoid "chasing windmills," and know "when to hold and when to fold, when to walk away, and when to run." They repeatedly described a calculus of assessing the reasonable chance for success before justifying the risks involved in doing moral discourse.

Participants described reasons that might lead them to conclude that the conversation would not be efficacious. Among them are circumstances marked by the perception of anticipated hostility. Eric reflected, "if you feel hostility, if you feel that they are not receptive, regardless of how strong your convictions may be, you shut up and leave." Elli described hostility at a controversial school board meeting on the subject of prayer at graduation.

> Probably the thing that made the biggest impact on me was sitting in that room with a packed audience. ... We had churches that had brought in busloads of people, and you could feel the hate in that room. You could literally feel it. It just had a profound impact on me. ... I understand people saying that they had a right to pray in their particular way, ...but the point was we were talking about trying to make it a situation where it wouldn't be acceptable to a diverse audience, and there were those who were so adamant and so emotional in their beliefs that ... hate was just coming from them.

Leaders talked about how they assess the prospects for success versus the costs involved and conclude that in many cases, "it's not worth the cost of investing myself." Chuck talked about the time he simply chose not to engage the superintendent who was berating the principals of low performing schools. He explained how for years he had attempted to engage the district leadership on the critical shortage of material and human resources in those schools, with little to show for it. Eventually he came to a point of simply not speaking out anymore.

> I didn't speak up and felt like it wouldn't do any good for me to speak up. I was going through an exercise in futility. It was something that he [the superintendent] had to say, to a group of principals. But he also knew the resources that we need in order to make the kind of gains that he was talking about. ... The impediments were in the way, and we've been talking about these impediments for the better part of ten years. We've talked about them over and over and over again. How much are you going to spend? How much of your capital are you going to spend on this particular issue, with this particular person? Will it make a difference?

In cases where the costs outweigh those potential benefits, leaders are often likely to withhold or withdraw from the conversation. The costs in time and emotional and intellectual capital seem not to justify the energy expended. David described the mental process he goes through in coming to that conclusion:

> I make a determination. Do I want to invest my energy and the emotional content of that energy in a one-on-one ego kind of thing, back and forth, that becomes more of a debate, than a dialogue? I make calculations, and I choose as to whether or not I want to get involved in an ego struggle or not ... and what the cost-benefits of that ego struggle may be. ...the benefits do not outweigh the costs at that time.

Similarly, participants talked about how they refrain from speaking out because they believe they simply won't be successful, usually because they have had repeated

experience of failed efforts in the past, as Chuck described above. In other scenarios, the point of the discourse "doesn't really make much difference in the course of things," because "systems are overwhelming" and the prospects for change minimal.

A belief that one's effort will lack efficacy relates also to the problem of time. Participants described several stories where time constraints prevented them from pursuing a protracted values conversation. An example was Tim's decision to pull back from advocating the bilingual program at his daughter's elementary school, because, he said,

> I just realized we couldn't fight it in enough time for it to make an effect, because it would have taken a year for any kind of appeals to be made in any kind of decision; but by that time, my daughter would have lost another year.

Another factor that demonstrates lack of self efficacy is a belief that people don't change. "There are times," said Patricia, "when you have to recognize that you are not going to change the minds and opinions and hearts of other people." Brian commented on a recent experience he had, where "those kinds of moral beliefs and attitudes, those things you learn as a child ... no matter how much I debated her, I was not going to change her mind." And Lisa withheld her sentiments despite the strong feelings she has for inclusive prayer at public civic gatherings. "I wanted to say something, ...[but] people said to me, 'Don't even try. I tried that before, and [that person] will not pray in an inclusive way. So, don't do it.' And so I haven't spoken out."

Burnout can be the endgame of a pervading sense of non-efficacy. Sarah described how she "got beaten down" when the values that gave meaning to her work in a former position were deemed no longer important to a new supervisor. "Those things were no longer a priority for the new leadership, so my priorities were not valued ... I was not appreciated for what I had to contribute to the organization." Because she believed that her values were no longer impactful in her work environment, and despite her best efforts, she lost energy and chose to leave that position. Similarly, Lisa reflected on

Debbie's story on why the latter chose not to express her value conflict with a division chief at City Hall. Considering the costs involved, weighed against the prospects for success, Lisa suggested that leaders simply "withdraw from the battle and give up." Herb expressed the same sense of self-defeat. "People just get tired and get beaten down by the forces that are working against their open conversation of whatever they are pursuing."

But Joe raised a counterpoint demonstrating leaders' capacity for resilience to withstand the threat of burnout despite non-efficacy. In some circumstances, the decision to withdraw or withhold may be prudent, wise, and a reflection of the leader's maturity. Rather than "giving up," the leader's act of withdrawal in such situations may better be described as letting-go. Failure to let-go is the dark side of tenacity in the face of non-efficacy, which runs the risk of burnout.

To summarize this first impediment, the data evidences that the perception of non-efficacy inhibits leaders from engaging others in values talk. It is prompted by a pervading sense that efforts to engage others in moral reflectivity in order to impact change will ultimately be unsuccessful. The reasons for that perception are anticipated hostility from others, a belief that the potential benefits of the discourse are not worth the cost in expended personal capital, the lack of time, a belief that individuals and systems can't change, and a concern that tenacious engagement will eventually bankrupt one's own energy and lead to burnout.

A second major impediment to moral discourse are individual behaviors that might be categorized under the heading of self-aggrandizement. Here, the speaker is exceedingly forthright in articulating personal beliefs, but is imbued with a sense of self-righteousness that has the effect of intimidating others and short-circuiting the conversation. One participant describes this as "ego-massaging" where one is blind-

sighted by one's own interests and one's own predispositions. It can be manifested as arrogance and preaching "at" others and dilutes the prospect for shared reflectivity. In its most extreme presentation, it takes the form of moral absolutism and is perceived as a judgment on others.

At the heart of the problem is a lack of listening. David reflects on an encounter he had with a member of his faculty in the hallway. "What good will come of this conversation? Are the people really interested in listening? Or is this an ego kind of self massage where one is subjected to another's morality?" Larry expressed the same idea. "So when people listen, they're listening for what they agree with or don't agree with, or not listening with an open mind. And so what they practice is not moral discourse. What they practice is ego-driven discourse." Elli put it this way: "We are so busy thinking about what we are gonna say, that we are not always listening. It is really hard to sit and listen. And that's an inhibitor, because you get so wrapped up in what you have to say."

In such situations, participants tend to operate from fixed positions grounded in ideological conviction and rigid belief systems where, as David said, "I try to convert you and you try to convert me." There is a perceived proselytizing motivation, a dynamic that clearly makes the discussion of religion and politics perceived as particularly intimidating to many. When reinforced with a sense of non-efficacy, the two impediments kill the discourse as participants are "locked in a war of conviction" where each really doesn't believe the other is willing to change and where the prospect for efficacy is lost in the endgame of winning a conversation where there are no winners. David's experience is illustrative.

> So often, many of those conversations are ego conversations. I have to convince you of the rightness of my conviction while you are trying to convince me of the rightness of your conviction, and tomorrow it doesn't make a hill of beans difference.

Others speak out, said Joe,

> Because they want to stand up above the crowd. They want to look different and ... want to get attention in the hopes that they will be lifted up ... because they are sort of iconoclastic ... they are [want to be seen as] the courageous one.

Such tactics can be empty and banal and be demonstrated in political grandstanding where the appearance of moral fervor is actually manipulative and serves one's own ends.

Herb believes that people who think rigidly are not prone to listen because they are fundamentally insecure in what they believe. Elli picked up on this notion when she said that "people who are really rigid about their beliefs maybe don't know what they believe. They believe what they believe because they've been told." She reflected back to the tumultuous discourse at school board meeting and concluded that those "who were most opposed to any sex education were the one's most uncomfortable talking about sex themselves." In a separate interview, Patricia painted a polarized discourse during a similar episode.

> For six hours we [the school board] sat ... and one after another, they came up, and they had pictures of their children, and they had the American flag, and they had their Bibles, and they were pointing their fingers at us, calling us evil, and awful, and immoral, because we wanted to have a sex education curriculum. ...and they were hostile, and they were very homophobic ... and several young students who were gay came up and spoke and then had to have police protection out of the room.

Elli suggested that such scenarios demonstrate that some people may actually use their own beliefs and values to purposefully polarize a situation. They can be "so unbending, not open minded ... they think any conversation about values is going to be a compromise of theirs. For someone to question what those values are, is very threatening to them." The problem exists on both the right and the left. Dan confessed to his own self-righteousness when his discourse "shifted from a dialogue to a diatribe" as he admonished a living room study group about the causes of racial unrest in the inner city. He described how his discourse spiraled down into "preaching at" the others whom he judged to be bigots. David described it similarly: "Whether it's the rigidity of my beliefs

or the rigidity of their beliefs, when we get to that point, dialogue becomes debate ... and then more than likely, it becomes a defensive posturing."

At that point, the whole notion of moral discourse becomes absurd. There is nothing left to talk about as participants' motives are reduced to defending their own position and responding to what are perceived as "attacks." And often the response is a counterattack. "Instead of thinking [about] or valuing what I am saying," George said, "they automatically devaluate it, and they automatically ... feel that whatever is being said here is threatening. And instead of discussing it, ... the automatic impulse is to shut it off, and sometimes to attack the messenger." In another illustration, Ryan told how his efforts to engage city council members on a matter resulted in several of them mistaking the issue as a personal affront. They responded to him with "personal attacks and innuendoes that were totally uncalled for."

There is an element of irony that underlies self-aggrandizing behaviors. On one level, they exhibit an active engagement in values discourse, but the initiative is short-changed because the individual's dispositions and motives are self-serving and counter-productive to the aims of dialogue. What initially is seen as the substance of moral talk, that is, one's beliefs, become the very impediment to the conversation. The mere injection of values into a conversation does not assure a moral discourse. One's beliefs themselves can be an impediment to the conversation, if one holds to those beliefs absolutely and ideologically and refuses to genuinely hear the other.

A third impediment focuses not on one's own beliefs, but on the false assumptions regarding another's beliefs. Those assumptions are rooted in false perceptions about others' beliefs, values or life experience and is evidenced by prejudice, stereotyping and labeling. It leads to an attitude of blaming and judging others' actions and intentions without sufficient knowledge and experience with the particularities that shape the other's experience.

Patricia underscored the problem. "It's not so much our beliefs that are the impediment. It is our perception of others' beliefs." If we make false assumptions, it is because we have based them on false perceptions. Patricia explained the challenge to overcome this impediment.

> We are not people who listen very well. ... It's that perception that gets in the way. If you and I have the time and if I am willing to honor you ... and you're willing to share with me your very deep beliefs, and I am willing to hear them honestly and openly and without prejudice, ... then I think you can begin to have that discourse. ... But, if you come in and I immediately make an assumption that he's got on a red tie, and I don't like men who wear red ties, therefore, he's in this category ... we make those judgments ... and I've developed a perception about you that could be totally false and then that clouds my ability to really get at you and with you as a person.

Participants described several stories that illustrated how moral conversation is killed by statement of prejudice based on false assumptions. Peggy was working with her Earth Day Planning Committee and her initiative to engage values talk for the purpose of working in an inclusive prayer into the program was thwarted by an element in the group who said, "Yes, we want to be inclusive, but not with that group!" Dan's "from dialogue to diatribe" conversation about blacks living in Detroit was exasperated by overtly racist remarks and prejudicial attacks on him by others in the group. Herb described the time he encountered a hostile person in a public group that was addressing the concerns of neighborhood redevelopment. The woman stood up and pointedly told him that she did not like the fact that "you rich white folks come in here and try to tell us how to run our community." Eric spoke of times he has been subjected to the prejudice of being affiliated with the "liberal media." Chuck felt that he suffers from a reputation that labels him as a "rebel rouser," while Jacob lamented his experience of the preacher's "stigma." And Marsha described several instances where her discourse at the insurance company was tainted by false assumptions by others who held to prejudicial sentiments regarding her status as a woman who had risen to the ranks of upper management. The labeling abounds and leads to a "big problem", as Peggy said.

> We put those labels on people. ...you're an environmentalist, you are a feminist, you are a Democrat. It's the sound byte thing. You put a tag on it. And that impedes open discussion, because, you have really decided who I am and what I am about.

Another individual impediment to the conversation is a domain of factors that I classify as fears. I identified three principle fears from the data: (1) fear of hurting others; (2) fear of hurting oneself; and (3) a fear of change. The first is of particular significance. Without exception, each focus group expressed fear that the substance of one's values communication risks being misunderstood and perceived as hurtful to others, though no hurt was intended. The leaders in this study were very concerned that they not embarrass others. They did not want to risk being perceived as insensitive to the feelings and beliefs of others, and they did not want to risk being seen as intolerant. It is evident that people often hold back from speaking out their beliefs out of concern and sensitivity to the feelings of others.

Elli told a story about the time she received a call from a local rabbi at the time she and the school board were deliberating the matter of public prayer during graduation ceremonies in the high schools. "Prayer should not be hurtful," the rabbi told her, "and there are people out there hurting." In the end, Elli advocated a moment of silence at graduation, despite the fact that she herself "believes very strongly in prayer and I don't think I could have gotten where I am at without prayer." Nonetheless, the inference is that prayer constitutes moral talk and is evocative of religious language and symbols, which can be perceived as divisive and offensive to others. In effect, the moment of silence is an abdication of moral discourse, a frustrated response to the apparent inability to enact public policy that legitimates the engagement of spiritual language that meets the needs of all while at the same time being offensive to none. The discourse, albeit prayerful discourse, did not occur, and seemingly, for a good reason, i.e., that no one experience hurt.

Time and time again, I found participants saying that they often held back in expressing their beliefs and values because they were afraid of hurting others, intimidating others, or being perceived as a bigot. Political correctness comes into play here, and is discussed in the next chapter. Participants expressed concern about opening "a can of worms," being perceived as "divisive," or causing "emotional turmoil." Eric captured the essence of the impediment when he said, "you don't want to hurt someone ... you are concerned ... you want to be considerate of the other party. Therefore, you choke on whatever you have to say." Lisa said that we withdraw even though the speaker believes that what he or she values is the "truth," but nonetheless, "we don't want to tell somebody else for fear of hurting their feelings." She admitted to it being "a constraint on open and honest conversation."

It is interesting to note that such withdrawal from the discourse can genuinely be motivated out of respect and compassion for others, as seems evident in Elli's conversation with the rabbi and her subsequent action at the school board. Similarly, Tim's rationale for making the decision to disengage the school principal on the bilingual program illustrates the same point.

> She [the principal] had done everything she could. And I felt that in fairness to her, the only thing that was going to happen was more wrath of the system was going to be on her...and that's what she said, "If you go over my head, this is what will happen to me...." And, you know, she has to run that school, day in and day out. ... I think that the consequence of speaking out, if we had done so, would have made that principal's life even more miserable than it was ...

Tim gave another account that captured the same idea. He described the time he was visiting his parents up North, and despite his own misgivings about the institutional church, chose to accompany his father to church one Sunday. He asks rhetorically, "Will you confront the issue, you know, about beliefs?" "No," he says, "because the other thing is you are honoring your dad too." Like Elli's case with the rabbi, Tim strikes a compassionate chord where his decision to refrain from the conversation is genuine and

done in good faith. But the point remains. Leaders often withhold speaking their values, out of deference for the feelings and values of others. And though the motives may be good, there can be a cost in the form of a diminished prospect for meaningful values conversation. Perhaps there is a way to do both, that is, in Tim's case, to honor his father while at the same time engaging the values talk that has the potential to become a means for their mutual growth.

Tim's decision exemplifies well the notion of social embeddedness central to a communitarian ethic (Bell, 1993). As persons, we are deeply bound up in the social order of our constitutive communities. Tim chose to withhold, but not because he felt coerced to do so. To the contrary, he freely chose to do it as a willful act done out of a sense of moral and social obligation, a duty, or a sense of responsibility. In this sense, though the values conversation did not happen, he clearly acted on the basis of a hierarchy of values that gave preference to the relationship he enjoys with his father. Thus, there is an important counterpoint here that must be acknowledged. Impediments may actually serve a good purpose in constraining the conversation. In Tim's case, and perhaps in Elli's above, the fear of hurting others may actually serve the purpose of sustaining the community.

But there is another dynamic operative here as well. Often one's fear of hurting another is driven by a concern that one's motive and purposes will be misunderstood by the other. In effect, hurt is caused, though no malice is intended. This raises the problem of intentionality which complicates the communicative process. Factual content is not the only thing that risks being misunderstood by the receiver of the message. Participants talked about a concern that their intentions and purposes are often incorrectly perceived by others. In many cases, the sender intends no hostility. Yet, the receiver perceives it as such. As Chuck told me, "I have found that often times, things that you thought you

heard, you didn't really hear at all ... or the person speaking didn't mean what you think that they meant by what they said."

A good example was the Jewish woman who said she was offended by a minister who offered a public prayer "in the name of Jesus" in a mixed civic gathering. Reflecting back on his own similar experience where he delivered a public invocation, Jacob, a minister, spoke persuasively that his prayer "came from within me, the deepest part of who I am as a person" and was offered as a "gift" on behalf of the community. He insisted that his prayer arose out of symbols and meaning that came out of his own spirituality and life experience. He repeatedly said that he had no intention to impose his experience or beliefs on others. It was a "sharing of myself, with no strings attached," he said.

Carol makes the clarifying point that for something to be hurtful, the receiver must perceive the sender as overtly antagonistic. "Having someone say a prayer and using the words that are meaningful to them are certainly appropriate, as long as you are not doing it to be antagonistic toward someone else; a lot of it has to do with your motivation." And yet, Lisa heard it as an "antagonistic" attempt to convert her own beliefs. Perception is reality and, regardless, the dynamics are counterproductive to meaningful values sharing. The problem is compounded by a sort of "sudden death" effect on values talk when one participant in the conversation throws down the red flag of "feeling hurt."

I was struck by the rabbi who told Elli very matter-of-factly that civic public prayer invoking Jesus' name was, ipso facto, hurtful to Jewish persons. Some months later, I met a thoughtful and sincere rabbi in another setting who made the statement, "If we don't know what hurts each other, how can we say we love one another?" The statement could be recast as, "if we don't know what hurts each other, how can we communicate?" In response to that, a number of participants seemed to be saying, "but how can we

communicate if we don't know each other's purposes and intent?" Thus, I am struck by the dialectic that exists between sensitivity to another's <u>feelings</u> and sensitivity to one's <u>intentionality</u>. The rabbi seems to place all the burden on the sender to exhibit greater sensitivity to the feelings of the receiver. He says nothing about the challenge to the receiver to evaluate the intentionality and "disposition of heart" of the sender. The sender is presumed to be the ogre, who must learn to defer to the receiver's feelings, perhaps not knowing what those feelings may be. I am suggesting such one-sidedness further risks the distortion of honest values conversation under the false pretense of tolerance and political correctness. Those are themes that I develop later. But the point here is that sensitivity to feelings and scrutiny of intentions need to be balanced. The sender is challenged to develop awareness and sensitivity regarding the other's feelings and experience. But, likewise, the receiver needs to better understand the intentions of the sender.

A second fear centers on the speaker's concern for hurting oneself. By withholding one's sentiments, one can maintain reputation and social stature in the community, or seek to avoid the retaliation of a vengeful reaction that may result in a diminishment of one's own emotional or material well being. Larry speaks forthrightly on this matter.

> I mean, when it comes right down to it, I don't think the motivation is simply that we don't want to hurt so and so. Its rather, we don't want to tick off so and so and have them come and hurt us by either attacking our ego, our institution, whatever ...and to be open to charges of political incorrectness.

Cindy picks up on the same idea:

> We don't want to be judged. We would like everybody to think that we are all fair people, and that we have, you know, no discrimination, no racist bone in our body, when in reality, everybody has some form of racism. ...There is some type of prejudice in all of us. ...We want to be [seen as being] fair and it's like we want to live in this perfect world, where everybody is perfect, and it just doesn't happen.

People tend not to speak out because their social or economic security may be jeopardized or they may be "looked at differently by their peers." Economic security particularly comes into play in the workplace, where one may perceive a threat to job security if one really says what one believe in conversations with management. George, the journalist, shared a compelling story about the time he purposefully withheld his sentiment on an issue at work, because,

> It revolved around how secure I felt in the position and among the people that I was with. I could read the tea leaves and read that when the guy, the managing editor, came back, he would learn who had spoken against him and get rid of those people.

And the managing editor did just that.

Cindy reminded the participants in her focus group, "You know, I have a family to feed, so therefore, I may not like it, but I may find a silent way in which to protest. But if I verbalize it, I am now jeopardizing my economic security." Brian resonates a similar experience. "I hadn't been at the school that long, and didn't know what kind of environment I was in, and what kind of trouble I could get myself in if I made an issue of it." And again, Debbie makes a similar point when she reflects on the values conflict she struggled with in her position as a political appointee at City Hall:

> I found myself in a situation that was not illegal, but for me, I felt was severely immoral and I didn't say anything. ... And it was basically because of my job ... and, you know, I am constantly in this position now with this job ... I think about it often ... is it worth it?

Other illustrations of a fear of hurting oneself are reflected in comments such as "hurting one's image," "losing face," "being rejected," and fear of losing "one's cool" and being made to feel foolish, stupid or ignorant. All reflect the notion of a loss in one's social security. Sarah withholds confronting a board member at the synagogue meeting for those kinds of reasons:

> I realized that I was angry at the time and anything I said would have come out defensive. ... And that was not the image that I wanted to leave in everyone's mind. I pride myself on being able to keep my cool, and am seen as someone

who is patient and someone who does not over-react usually. So I wasn't going to allow that perception that I wanted others to have of me [to be otherwise], and so I did not react.

Moral discourse risks putting oneself in an environment to hear and think new thoughts and consider new possibilities. Change is at the heart of the process, and that is precisely why it is so pivotal to the role and responsibility of leadership. Yet, anxiety about change and unknown possibilities represents another means that fear can impede moral conversation. It is particularly relevant in the context of change associated with organizational development. Change risks the loss of social capital that sustains group coherence while organizations struggle to maintain resilience in the face of it (Kotter, 1990).

People tend to resist change, and that's because they tend to find safety "in their own position," says Herb, the architect. He suggest that people can't grow until they are first secure in their own beliefs, whether those beliefs be "political, religious, or whatever." But often those safe positions function as "comfort zones of complacency" and serve to fortify one's resistance to other ways of thinking and acting. To go outside those zones "into unsafe areas" can be "really scary for a lot of people."

Self-doubt is yet another impediment that can dilute or inhibit the conversation. Included in this category are a variety of factors that can limit an individual's cognitive, emotional and psychological capacity to participate in the conversation. These factors may include feelings of intimidation, a lack self confidence, uncertainty about one's own values and beliefs, as well as the influence of negative past life experiences, all of which can serve to debilitate one's participation in substantive values talk.

Self-doubt is the antithesis of self-mastery (Covey, 1989; Senge, 1990) and can be evidenced by feelings of intimidation. Brian describes his sense of sometimes feeling "vulnerable" and having a tendency to "smile and don't say anything and kind of walk away from the conversation that you felt uncomfortable in." At other times, self-doubt is

evidenced by defensive behavior. Sarah recounted an incident where the leader of the synagogue's board of elders "cut off discourse" on a controversial matter where strong feelings were being discussed. She suggests "this is probably a person who does not have a lot of self-confidence" and is prone to resort to defensive and confrontative behavior when others do not agree with her.

Feelings of being threatened or intimidated are complex communication patterns that kill the dialogue and prevent an honest exchange of values discourse. They are symptomatic of self doubt, but they also come to play in the context of fears about hurting oneself and the problem of intentionality. These dynamics can confuse the real source of the intimidation. For instance, is it the persona of the sender (messenger) or is it the substance of what the sender says (message) that causes the intimidation in the experience of the receiver? Is the intimidation active or passive? It is active in those cases where intimidation is caused by the overt intended action of the sender who purposefully seeks to intimidate the other. It is passive when it results from the receiver's perception, regardless of any intended act by the sender.

Sarah tells a story that begins to capture a sense of the complexity. She described how she felt intimidated in the presence of a certain "rich, powerful, and articulate white male" at the synagogue board meeting. She knew she disagreed with what the person said, to the point of feeling angry. Still, that doesn't fully capture why she chose not to speak out. I am left to conclude that she was disempowered because she felt intimidated by the person, not the message. Similar dynamics come to play for Larry, the executive director of the community foundation, where at times he feels intimidated by the power and demeanor of members of his board whom he described as a "huddle of quarterbacks" or a "gathering of eagles." Marsha, a very self assured and forthright woman, told several stories that illustrate how as a manager she believed her male counterparts were often intimidated by her proficiency. Typically, she avoided

direct engagement with several of them, inferring that open conversation might be perceived as too threatening to her male colleagues. Conversely, Debbie's story of how she deliberatively avoided the conversation with her male supervisor at City Hall, demonstrates that some "women are still intimidated by men in high positions," as it was put by Sarah. Much of all this relates to the exchange of power in conversation and is discussed later in the context of dynamics within organizational culture.

But people may be intimidated by the message as well. One may experience a disturbing sense of uncertainty about one's own values and beliefs when suddenly faced with an alternative viewpoint articulated by someone who appears to be certain and knowledgeable. Or, one may feel ignorant on a matter that perhaps one has never thought about before. If one's own sense of self worth and identify is bound to the maintenance of a particular belief, then any consideration of an alternative point of view presents a "disorienting dilemma" (Mezirow, 1991). Without confidence in one's own person, one is not likely to risk "perspective transformation" by sailing upon the turbulent waters of critical thinking to reach the unknown distant shores of an alternative viewpoint. The overriding temptation is to maintain security and retreat back to what is familiar and to maintain resolve in the comfort and security of a former perspective.

Effective transformational leaders ultimately rise above their feelings of self doubt and intimidation. Larry deals admirably well with his "huddle of quarterbacks," and Sarah has learned to deal with her "rich, powerful articulate male" fellow board member, telling me "I have not allowed him to intimidate me again." This would seem to indicate that regardless of the source of the intimidation, intended or not, active or passive, the intimidation as a deterrent to expressing one's values is something that the receiver has final control over. If push comes to shove, if one succumbs to intimidation and withdraws, it seems largely due to the passivity of the receiver. Regardless of the sender's intentions, intimidation exists if the receiver allows it, and if it is perceived as

such by the receiver of the communication. In the end, then, the receiver must deal with it, either by acquiescing, or rising above it. Transformational leaders seem to be able to do that effectively.

There is an interesting dialectic here when viewed in relationship to the forthcoming discussion regarding the practice of how transformational leaders allow themselves to become vulnerable in their moral conversation. Leaders who are effective communicators of values and engage others as such, enhance their power to stimulate the values reflectivity in others by their own honesty, candor and vulnerability. But in being so vulnerable, they also run the risk of exposing themselves to the assault of others. Such leadership demands that one not simply "take a stand", but rather stand courageously, seemingly naked at times, in the face of abuse, without succumbing to the intimidation. To be intimidated is to be made to feel overwhelmed with fear that disempowers. When someone is perceived as an aggressor who intimidates the other, the aggressor plays to the other's fears and self doubts. Transformational leaders can rise above that. They do not allow their own self-doubts to impede their engagement with the values discourse.

Self doubt can also be brought on by painful memories of the past that reinforce one's fear of hurting oneself. During a follow-up interview, Elli, the former school board member, reflected back on the focus group conversation between Jacob, the Baptist minister, and Lisa, the Jew, on the matter of inclusive prayer at public civic meetings. Elli admitted to being "very careful about what I said on that issue..." because, "some of it with me may just be some of my scars ... and I was very aware of feeling some of those old feelings." Past negative memories act to constrain our conversation in the present. Again, this dynamic interfaces with the fear of hurting oneself as previously discussed. Elli was fearful that she might be misunderstood and bring still further hurt upon herself or others. The point here is that memory of negative feelings in past discourse can act to

diminish one's self confidence and deter one's engagement on those issues in future situations.

Similarly, Tim recalled past conversations with a family member who was very confrontational. He now avoids engaging that person and "others like him." He went on to say,

> That kind of person would probably be the hardest person for me to talk with. It goes back to kind of being accused by that family member, [who said to me], "oh, you're going to go to hell, because you don't believe those things.

One's lack of knowledge and experience can limit the discourse. This final impediment is closely related to and contributes to self doubt, but it focuses more on the practical skills and knowledge necessary to engage the discourse. If one lacks that knowledge, skill and experience, that deficiency contributes to one's lack of confidence and self doubt. This impediment generally manifests itself as ignorance or lack or awareness about the particular issue that might be engaged, or it may reflect a lack of experience in the actual practice of the kind of conversation that elicits values talk. The later is not surprising, given the prevalent notion in the literature that as a society we have largely lost touch with the very language to engage moral conversation (Bellah et al., 1991; MacIntyre, 1984).

Participants spoke about times they felt uncertain and unknowledgeable on issues that came up in conversations. "You don't want to make a fool of yourself, " Marsha said. "If you speak out, and you're wrong, or you haven't studied, its kind of embarrassing." The overlapping of impediments is evident here, as Marsha speaks of hurting her ego as a result of taking part in a conversation where she feels she lacks a sufficient knowledge base. The impediment can function actively or passively. If one speaks out, but is perceived as grossly ignorant, the other may choose to withdraw (active impediment). Or, if one is unaware of the issue, such that one is oblivious to it, one has no reason to engage the conversation (passive impediment).

This lack of awareness or ignorance can exist simply because people haven't reflected on the matter. It may also be that the person knows, but does not know that she or he knows, so that the knowledge is a sort of nonrational tacit knowledge that lies below the level of consciousness. Reflecting on this phenomenon, Larry hints at the suggestion that moral conversation can be the means to unpack one's beliefs and help one clarify what one believes. In so doing, one can attain a higher level of awareness. "People may need to be more forthcoming about what they may not know what they think, or may not know what they feel ... but which they do indeed feel and think intensely." Nonetheless, Steve sees the real limitations imposed on the discourse by the other's state of awareness. Using language akin to Clara Graves' notion of spiral dynamics and the progressives stages and tiers of consciousness (cited in Wilber, 2000, p. 8), Steve reflected on the problem.

> No human being functions beyond his current level of awareness. ... many times you can't get into a discourse with them, until you can raise their awareness in some manner or other. ... Many people live within their narrow environment, which is their mind, and what they think. ... But people have to become aware of something that makes them rise to a higher level of functioning. What we do, is we kind of go up a staircase of it.

This lack of awareness is compounded by the fear of hurting another person who, because he or she lacks an awareness, may misunderstand the speaker's intention. "Sometimes when you speak up," Chuck said, "you might offend a person who might not have enough information to really extend to where you are trying to go. You have to weigh whether or not the hearer is going to be able to connect with what you have to say." The point is that the other person in the conversation may not have those experiences, and so may not be able to "connect" with it. In the absence of shared life experience, there are few connecting points, few resonating ideas, values, and experiences. Once again, the conversation is short-circuited.

Finally, and particularly significant, several participants talked about a growing problemwhere the culture that does not model and emulate substantive moral conversation, particularly in the context of the educational development of children. We often do not teach people how to practice it nor model it. In particular, we fail to teach people how to think reflectively, critically, and ethically about issues and then how to express that reflectivity in the art of moral conversation. Moral Discourse is a learned behavior. Steve underscores the point:

> One of the inhibitors is that if we don't teach people when and how to deal with moral issues. If you think about the school system, it doesn't teach it very much. In my whole life, I have taught lots of courses, but I have only taught ethics once. ... If we could teach that kind of moral discourse, how to handle it, how to deal with it, how to do it, at a much earlier time in a person's life, [people] would know when it is worth it to speak up and when is it worth it not to. That's a serious inhibitor, a lack of training that needs to take place. ... We don't teach people how to deal with their bosses or public figures. We don't teach them how to deal with those people, and so we have to learn that through experience. We as leaders learn that, but the majority of the population never learn that.

Elli agrees, but puts the onus on parents instead of the schools, citing "the adult population who lack engagement with the issues." She argues that so many adults simply abdicate any meaningful discussion of the issues of the day and the values that underlie those matters. Further,

> They don't spend time discussing [the issues] with their kids. ... There are adults who still believe that kids should be seen and not heard, that they are just children and their opinions don't matter, and for some, it's just easier for them to send them off to play their video games. So I think it's important for adults to engage them in the conversation.

Patricia expressed a similar concern: "If you talk to young people today, I think you'll see two things. It jumps out to me. Their vocabulary is much more limited, and their ability to carry on conversations with adults is very limited."

It is evident that young people develop their conversational skills by the practice of values talk on the issues with other adults. If they lack those formative experiences,

their capacity to practice moral discourse as responsible citizens in adulthood will likely be impeded.

Social and Cultural Impediments

Individual impediments are not the only obstacles to the conversation. There are other factors that impede the conversation and that spring from the culture and the social relationships that define that culture. These may include the (1) dominant cultural discourse; (2) the fact/value split that permeates much of civic discourse; (3) the loss of social capital and natural communities in American society; and (4) variance in culture, ethnic and historical experience.

The dominant discourse often acts to deter what is seen as inappropriate values that contradict the fundamental premises that underlie the society and culture, discounting the relevancy of conflicting beliefs that may arise in the public civic discourse. The dominant discourse is enshrined in ideological predispositions that shape the dominant social consciousness and is reinforced by parochialism, group think and elitism. Perhaps its most significant manifestation in American culture is a singular focus and adulation of individualism in the American psyche (Bellah et al., 1985). It debilitates the civic moral discourse that can reveal shared values and the common good. The very notion of the common good is deemed "un-American" and is denigrated by a litany of "my rights against your rights" and rebuttals of "not in my backyard." Larry puts it well.

> We are a nation built on individualism. ... Our national heroes are folks that blow away the common good in the defense of liberty, justice and the American way ...therefore, we've become very insecure in where we stand, because it is me against you.

The culture's preoccupation with economic materialism and consumerism is an extension of individualism and further restricts the conversation. When people come together in public settings to talk values, said Larry, " ...they are playing in an environment that is close to rank hedonism. ...The person who is the most willing to

wield money or power tends to create a domino effect, a group think." The result is an "absence of consciousness," where "most folks prefer to be asleep."

> Our culture, our economic system and our religious institutions prefer that you be asleep. ... this [public moral discourse] is dangerous stuff. In order to keep us asleep, we are bombarded with stimuli. We are bombarded with rules. We are bombarded with script. We're bombarded with music. ...In an environment that noisy, that tumultuous, that busy, we fill our lives with producing and consuming. There is no sacred space where we can have a values discussion.

Larry went on to talk about how "the culture beats you down." Lisa added, "we don't want to talk about our values because of the public criticism," to which Sarah quips "particularly so, if you're part of a minority." People who hold the minority position are more likely to withdraw in the face of the dominant discourse. Debbie illustrated the point as she spoke of her struggle to reconcile her own pro-choice position with the church's dominant discourse.

> I'm in conflict. As a Catholic, you're not supposed to be pro-choice, and I'm pro-choice. So, do you get into a conversation, a political conversation, or have someone tell me, 'you can't vote for that candidate, because you're Catholic?' So it's hard.

These and similar remarks by the study's participants illustrate how ideologies and belief systems that are embodied within institutions often act to frame the cultural discourse while constraining more open values talk. This seems to be particularly the case with politics and religion. There is a peculiar irony here. The roots of our deepest values and moral beliefs often come from our religious experience and our political dispositions. And yet, in conventional parlance, we are taught as adults to avoid talking about religion and politics in public spaces of civil society, because so often they are actually the cause of the stalemate and the conversational impasse. Larry makes the point well when he says,

> [Religion and politics] ... those are natural venues for those kinds of conversations; the trouble is, the conversations are generally not conversations. ... They're position statements. They are sermons. And the conversation ... tends to be largely agreements with sermons, and it works politically to.

Many of the participants in Larry's focus group nodded their heads with agreement and were particularly attentive on his point. He seemed to have struck a resounding chord underscoring the idea that the very institutions that seem particularly appropriate for moral discourse are so likely hampered in their efforts. The effect of such conversations often drives what I later describe as the "polarized/privatized dichotomy" that is evident in much of civic discourse. This dynamic is the mark of most highly controversial and intractable issues. The conversation often becomes polarized because each side holds to a fixed ideological position. For religion, its dogma. For politics, it can be the party platform, policy position, or perhaps the law. In either case, there is no room to maneuver. Polarized positions form around clearly delineated and opposing positions, such as the situation that Elli and Patricia found in the school board meeting described earlier. The result is an impasse, surely a mark of contemporary American party politics.

The alternative is disengagement and retreat back into "privatized" and familiar waters "where we have a tendency to just sort of stay within our comfort zone." Debbie illustrates this in the follow-up interview.

> We kind of walk on eggshells and we try to be politically correct. And we sit back and listen, and when we hear things that we don't think are parallel to our values, then you tend not to say anything. ...I probably don't get into those types of discussions in groups unless I know that people have the same like values.

In those settings, one can think, converse and act among like-minded people. This is the substance of parochialism that sustains a ghetto mentality. It is a striking dark side of the "safe places" that can stimulate meaningful values conversation, a notion I develop in the next section. Only here, those safe places have become introverted value-lockdowns among isolated like-thinking elitists who deny or are simply unaware of the legitimacy of others' thinking. In its simplest manifestation, it takes the form of moral discourse that is "preaching to the choir" and only serves to reassure the group's predispositions and solidify the rigidity of members' convictions, making it more difficult

for them to be supple and flexible in the wider pluralistic society. In its worst case

scenario, such parochialism metastasizes into militant tribalism that makes impossible

any notion of universal values, rights and human dignity (Niebuhr, 1965). It is the idea of

serving only the good "of my own kind" and is ultimately manifested in extreme forms of

nationalism and tribal militant fundamentalism. It is surely the stuff of violence

demonstrated in warfare and international terrorism.

Herb describes the dynamic in terms of "win-lose situations" that breed an

"enemy" mentality. As he puts it, we often think in terms of,

> This is the way, and everybody else can sort of go to hell. ... Our religions teach
> that, our politics are teaching that -- that somebody's gotta win and somebody's
> gotta lose. ... And its amazing the intolerance towards other faiths that 'we're
> right, and they're wrong' ... there's a whole sense of being in our 'rightness.'
> ...the Republicans have to judge the Democrats ...

He goes on to underscore the problem when it is compounded with an elitism

framed by economic and political power.

> And I hate to say it, but I find that many of my business associates, especially a
> lot of the high powered business associates of this town who hold certain political
> positions ... are to the particular point of just laughing and mocking presidents,
> mayors, governors ... poking fun if they don't think the way we do. ... our political
> systems are becoming examples of what's wrong with our country. Its kind of like
> defending my position at all costs ... it's either win or lose ... you don't
> compromise. We've got people entrenched in ideologies that they can't see the
> good in the other. ... The arrogance of saying that you are totally intolerant of
> another person's point of view, to the point that that person is the 'enemy' ... that
> needs to be crushed.

In a separate focus group, David reflected similar sentiments about the ways that

ideology makes enemies of others. He challenged the participants "to get behind the

ideology," because often, when we are in our ideologies, "we see each other's evil." The

consequence is often demonization in politics and religion, leaving virtually no room for

dialogue. But, says David, when we start talking over time, words gradually "slip behind

our ideologies" and we can begin to understand one another. "We start talking about

what I like, what I value, what's important to me, and you do the same." We talk values,

not ideologies. Values and beliefs arise out of authentic expressions of the persons who

partake in the conversation. To the contrary, ideologies are impersonal fictitious

intellectual constructs that hold grip on the dominant cultural discourse and defy the

critical thinking of those who would engage in the moral discourse.

I identified a second major social/cultural impediment as the Fact/Value split that

marks so much of public conversation. As a result of our attempts to honor tolerance and

diversity, and because people have different values, we tend to remove beliefs and

values from the dialogue table. We simply say, as one participant put it, "let's just keep

to the facts." But in the process, we are left with a values vacuum.

Yet, values permeate all discourse. They are part of our experience and are an

integral part of the "facts" of our lives. "Everything is laden with meaning and has a

values orientation," said Larry. Ray suggests that a "values factor" impacts all our

decisions. Jacob expounds on the dualism that falsely separates facts from their

underlying values.

> We have not embraced the idea that in everything that we do ...there is a moral
> principle or value undertone. What we try to do is separate the moral from the
> practical ... and in reality there is no separation because the decisions we make
> are based upon the under-garmenting or the underlying moral environment. ... I
> mean, you can try to divide them, but the process causes other dynamics that
> are repercussions of the whole process of trying to separate one from the other.
> ... In reality, they [facts and values] are all one and the same.

Tillich (1969) suggests that our values constitute a sort of secular faith, though

we may not speak of them in religious language. They point to the objects of our most

important concerns. Values underlie all our beliefs and our approach to interpreting the

facts. We cannot do otherwise.

Often, in the public space, there is a biased insistence to just "give me the facts"

under the pretense of objectivity. Further, there is a sense that values smack of feelings,

and the latter are suspect because they are nonrational. A critical problem that seems to

underlie the split between facts and values is a bias against expressing any feelings in

public spaces. Values are somehow misconstrued to be emotional and laden with feelings. Though uncontrolled expression of feelings can subvert discourse, our values and beliefs nonetheless can be shared and reflected upon intelligently. Though seemingly nonrational, they are not irrational. They are legitimate dimensions of human discourse. Simply put, because we tend to write off feelings in public dialogue, we also tend to discount the values that underlie those feelings and intuitions. Elli's comments are telling in this regard.

> What you are talking about are the emotional issues, which you can't ignore. You can acknowledge them, but ultimately you have to decide how much are you willing for them to affect the bottom line, which is ultimately what's best. And that was one of the most, the hardest things for me to learn ... because I'm a feeler off the charts, an emotional person, maybe, in some ways .... But I learned that you got to, without being completely cold and heartless, you got to put them in perspective ... the emotions ...and when it's related to making a decision, you just have to, after a certain point, say, you know, it doesn't affect that.

Because Elli sees feelings and emotions as suspect, the values that underlie those feelings tend to be ignored under the pretense that they are "irrelevant" to the bottom line. They are not seen as expedient, practical, and productive in the utilitarian sense. Nonetheless, they shape meaning and are so very relevant. There's a factor of balance here. The nuance is evident in Sarah's comment, "Expressing your opinion and your perspective and your beliefs without letting your feelings get in the way, this is the difficult thing to do." She seems to be suggesting that if we get emotional, that tends to be viewed by others as somehow contaminating, cheapening, or delegitimizing the significance of the values or beliefs we are trying to communicate. Often, it appears, our values are misread as simply subjective feelings and are easily dismissed, and with it, so goes the Fact/Value split.

Earlier, I alluded to the problem of emotionalism that can be self-serving, manipulative, coercive and intimidating to others. The distortion is evident in sudden and inappropriate outbursts of anger, losing control of one's temper, or as one participant

described it, "losing one's cool." Emotionalism can surely distort the discourse. Further, it can lead to moral emotivism, a form of moral reasoning where all evaluative and moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference based on personal attitudes and feelings (MacIntyre, 1984). Still, the dangers of emotionalism and emotivism do not of themselves disqualify the expression of feelings and their underlying values in the practice of moral conversation.

The fact/value spit leads to a dysfunction in democracy evidenced by an empty public space, or the "naked public square" (Neuhaus, 1984), where moral talk is simply not at all relevant in the civic discourse. The sole determiners in deciding matters of public policy are economic and utilitarian, with no consideration of the "good" in the moral sense. I develop this idea in Chapter Five as I consider the implications of leaders' practices of moral discourse in the arenas of civil society and the political bodies of participatory democracy. At this point, I simply wish to underscore that values talk must legitimate the inclusion of a body of knowledge and life experience beyond the factual. Such discourse will give voice to participants' stories, their beliefs, their values, hopes and dreams.

Though not part of the actual database, concurrent to my research, I witnessed a civic meeting that illustrated well the fact/value split and the resulting naked public square. The context was a community meeting that reported the results of a study to access the prospects of a needle exchange program for purposes of preventing HIV infection among drug users. Panelists repeatedly emphasized the "facts" and minimized any consideration of values that might shape a moral perspective, for fear of polarizing the participants in the meeting. The facilitator specifically stated that the group was "only interested in facts," and stated upfront that the focus of concern "is not a moral issue." Shortly after, a member of the audience who was an attorney, objected strongly to the exclusion of values that have moral import, citing his concern that such a program would

condone illicit activity, and be gravely immoral in his perspective. But to the contrary, another member of the audience stood up and also objected to the exclusion of values and the moral context of the issue, but cited very different reasons. As a caregiver of a person with AIDS, he insisted that the issue be viewed from a moral perspective, though his perspective was entirely different from the attorney, as he felt implementing the program was the morally right thing to do. The situation underscores the problem. Without engaging the moral discourse that lies beneath the "facts," the conversation is short-changed and shared meaning in hopes of serving the public common good is elusive. Yet, if we are to engage the values discourse, we need to find means to work through the differences of values. The anecdote illustrates well the problems that come about when public groups attempt to deny the moral aspects that lie behind many issues.

A third social/cultural impediment to the conversation picks up on an earlier point made by Larry. Individualism and materialism in the culture are distracting to such extent that we no longer have the space to have the conversation. There are diminished public venues to engage other citizens in the kinds of conversations that have moral import. Much of that has to do with the loss of natural communities and the social capital that sustains those communities.

Natural communities are the constitutive communities where citizens gain their social identity (Bell, 1993). They are the groups and associations that frame the day-to-day activity of our daily lives and that constitute the arena of civil society. Delgado (1997) defines them in terms of natural support systems that provide for the growth, welfare, safety and development of citizens. They are the family and community systems that provide the context of the meaningful interpersonal relationships that give us a sense of identity, belonging and connectedness. Popenoe (1995) describes natural communities as village-like stable communities which have families as their basic building blocks, and

yet have a mix of diverse people who regularly engage one another through free association and sets of relational networks that maintain some semblance of a shared common life. Natural communities are framed by our neighborhoods and the semi-public gathering places where we engage in commerce, recreation and socializing (Oldenburg, 2001). They include the neighborhood tavern, the "Mom and Pop" grocery, the corner coffee shop and bookstore, the local church, and the neighborhood school. They are the bedrock of social capital and the stuff that defines our social embeddedness and sustains our commitment to the community and concern for its common good. They are precisely the places in civil society where we are most likely to have the quality of relationships that can sustain meaningful and substantive public moral conversation. Yet, these places seem be in increasing short supply in America over the last 40 years.

Marsha described how "we've lost the places for public discourse. We don't have town meetings anymore." And Ray spoke of the problem of sub-urbanization. "We no longer live downtown, so we're spreading out. ... There is no sense of community ... and so it's a challenge to get [a sense of] public opinion."

When the conversation does happen in civil society, it often attempts to fabricate what Larry called "artificial" communities of conversation, in lieu of the natural communities that seem to be so elusive. For instance, Eric cites so called "town-meetings" that are really well-intentioned public relations ploys of the mayor's office, "and three people show up ... and you have to literally go and drag people to come out and participate." It's artificial because the forum is fabricated and doesn't automatically arise within the normal discourse of natural community.

In another example, Larry described how his Foundation has funded several projects that in effect created "artificial communities" to talk about substantive matters, because there were few natural forums in neighborhoods, churches and local

communities to engage people on a host of issues that impact their lives and the public

policies that shapes their lives. For instance, he says,

> We funded one such venue for Hospice, because what they found was that they were getting lots of questions about death and dying issues that didn't have anything to do, really, with the patients that they were treating. ... So, one of the venues, is we force the venue, we create the venue, because there is a lack of natural venue.

Much of the diminishment of natural communities can be linked to the loss of

social capital (Putnam, 1995, 2000), a phenomenon validated by the experience and

perspectives of the participants in the study. Communities are not as intact as they used

to be. People are a lot more isolated and live private, secluded lives. Dewey saw the

problem so many years ago. Unless local manifestations of common life can be

maintained, the "public and its problems" persist. Our sense of public is impoverished

because it its unable "to find itself and identify itself" (Dewey, 1984). Patricia spoke

persuasively on the point. "The discourse, the conversation, the pulling in and sharing

that brings people into groups doesn't seem to be there as much." She reminisced about

a bygone day when "we could walk the dog at night and talk to the neighbor over the

fence, and have pot luck dinners, and those kinds of things." She went on to bemoan the

fact that we are overworked, consumed by technology, and have less interaction with

one another, even within our families.

> Our work week has increased, it's not diminished. Technology is driving us crazy! ... I worry about our young people who go home to empty households, and turn on the computer or the Nintendo, or the Game Boy, or the TV ... and late at night they may see Dad who's finally come in, or they may see mom ... but, no, there's not a lot of human interaction.

Larry spoke of the problem of isolation in bedroom communities where people

don't live where they work and work where they live. He described another project

undertaken by his organization for the purpose of "encouraging conversational

community values."

> What we discovered was that we tend to categorize or box or package things in our culture ... particularly, we Americans, who tend to be so work oriented, as opposed to say, Europeans ... In Europe, people don't work so much, they've got long vacations, their work days aren't so long, and they spend a lot of time conversing and socializing with one. ... They get together and gravitate toward large communal meals, at which all kinds of things were discussed. Whereas In America, particularly in an environment like Jacksonville, which is one big bedroom community for the most part, we really don't have community here because we have to get in our cars to drive long distances to get to work.

The situation makes for a culture "where people are becoming less and less known to one another." And in that absence, "it's very difficult to have meaningful communication." Resonating Wurthnow's notion of "loose connections" (Wuthnow, 1998), Joe said, "there's not the continuity and the depth dimension and so on that used to be in the places of employment, in the civic places, in the connections ... people don't have as deep connections."

Tim spoke of the "soccer mom" phenomenon as one such loose connection that falls short of the substantive relationships needed to sustain the natural communities of moral discourse.

> Kids gather around themes, and adults tend to gather around their kids' themes instead of their own themes. And, many of the adults live out their lives as soccer moms, driving the kids around. And yet, they're not necessarily ... building some kind of supportive community.

A common theme that emerged in the participants' reflection, and one that significantly contributes to the breakdown of social capital, is the lack of sufficient time to build meaningful relationships of trust. It takes time to build attachments and commitment to one's community. Similarly, it takes time to build relationships in organizations in the workplace. But people move around too much. As Joe said,

> We don't spend that much time with each other ... and until that happens, a lot of times, the moral thing doesn't come out. ... you have to trust the people that you are having a moral discourse with, or the environment has to be important enough that you have to stand up. ... if you knew you had to stay in the environment and make it work ... [or], if it's a job that's important to you ... then you are going to try to do those things, you know, the moral discourse.

Chuck spoke of the time issue in terms of his efforts to build trusting relationship

in the school where he is the principal. "It requires a lot of patience and time. ... It's

overwhelming, the time constraints." Yet, taking time to build those trusting relationships

is essential for organizational stability, whether in the workplace or in the neighborhood.

The problem afflicts not only suburbia, but the inner city as well, particularly in the

schools. Chuck said,

> You have a very very fluid population of children that you work with, parents that
> you work with and teachers that you work with. So you are constantly in a state
> of change in the inner city. ... It appears every year, you are giving an orientation
> to a new group and every three years, if you take a third a year, you are back in a
> vicious cycle of starting over almost again.

As a concluding note on this impediment, I found it particularly interesting that,

with few exceptions, most leaders in my study have been residents of Jacksonville for

many years. They seemed to be invested in the community. Jacob grew up in the city

but talked about "coming home to Jacksonville" after nearly a 20 year hiatus, "with a

mission to be a force for change." Dan moved to Jacksonville 14 years ago, "and never

regretted a minute of it. I loved it from day one." He describes himself as a citizen who is

"involved" and wants to be "part of the community, and to help it grow." It is evident that

the leaders in my study have a base of social capital stock that sustains their efforts to

make Jacksonville "a better place."

Larry's comment about differences in the work culture in the U.S. and Europe

points to my fourth and final social/cultural impediment to moral conversation. I describe

it in terms of the variance in culture, ethnic, geographical and historical experience

among the potential participants in the conversation. That variance impacts the

predispositions, beliefs and values that people bring into potential forums for moral

discourse.

That variance can negatively impact moral discourse in two distinct ways. The

first has to do with one's perspective on what constitutes good manners and social

conventions. A number of participants cited differences in life experience that can make one believe moral discourse is impolite and intrusive, seeming disrespectful of others' personal space. In that view, moral conversation, particularly if it takes the form of questioning or confronting another's beliefs and values, is seen as socially inappropriate and leads to a posture of not speaking out. "It is not polite," said George, "particularly here in Jacksonville, and in the South." To the contrary, he suggests, "If you're in New York or Boston, ... people are much less concerned about other people's feelings; they are less concerned about being polite. ... They're much more willing to kind of get-in-your-face."

Brian talked about growing up in a small southern town where he learned "to keep your mouth shut" and simply "smile, and don't say anything," for fear of offending others. That behavior is reflected in his story about the time he did not engage house guests who made overtly anti-Semitic remarks. "We've been brought up to be polite and nice. If we speak our mind, it will hurt peoples' feelings," said Marsha.

But Tim, who was raised in the North, made a counterpoint regarding differences between the North and the South in conversations that address religious beliefs. Nonetheless, it still demonstrates how geography influences different conversational approaches. In the North, he said, "No one ever asked me if I was saved. ...but people might do that in the workplace here [in the South]."

Secondly, variance in culture and life history influences the content of the conversation because the participants come from different perspectives that shape not only their moral beliefs, but also their interpretation of words, signs and symbols that communicate value-laden concepts. Variance in culture contributes to communication patterns, expressed in language and symbols that can be perceived differently. For instance, the word "cracker" may or may not be perceived with racist overtones and is interpreted differently among blacks and whites. The focus group exchange between

Brian, a white male raised in the South, and David, an African American, was particularly

revealing on this point. For Brian, the word "cracker" is rather innocent.

> It doesn't bother me at all ...even my friends who kid around and call each other crackers all the time. ... I call my brother a cracker, because he speaks with a southern accent. ... Its not as offensive as I think, you know, the word "nigger" is to you.

But David sees the word very differently.

> As a child growing up, to me the word 'cracker' was as powerful against whites as the word 'nigger' was to blacks. And so the interchange became, "Hey nigger come here ... shut up cracker." ... in this discussion, he [Brian] did not see 'cracker' as a negative term, which is his perception.

> Similarly, Cindy, an African American, told the story of a conversation she had

with a white girlfriend, saying, "There would be some things within my culture that she

just wouldn't understand, like it's ok, it's just a black thing. ...You're not going to

understand it!" In a separate focus group, Tim resonated a similar notion from a white

person's perspective.

> As a white person, we will never, never understand [the black thing]. ...It's not like you're Italian-American, or Irish-American, because no one knows that. But when you are black, you are still seen as black. You know what I mean?

> The data illustrated other examples. Ryan's military experience in Vietnam led

him to a strong dislike of former president Bill Clinton. He made a strong value judgment,

calling Clinton a "hypocrite." Yet, Ryan's harsh judgment on Clinton needs to be viewed

in the context of their varying life experience vis-à-vis U.S. military involvement in

Vietnam.

> This guy [Clinton] was about two months older than me ... thirteen guys in my squadron didn't make it back from Vietnam, and he was over burning our flag in England. I have a personal dislike about that kind of behavior, and then someone laying wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknowns, or the Vietnam Wall, which I consider to be very hallow ground. ... So I have some very personal opinions about that.

> Ryan's past experience leads him to risk making assumptions about another's

actions, perhaps not knowing the other's real intentions and the fuller context of the

other's life experience. The temptation is to blame and judge the other who has different

life experience that on the surface appears to threaten the security of one's own

predispositions that are based on one's own experience.

Similarly, Joe reflects on elements of his own life story that have influenced his

moral beliefs. He talked about coming to moral consciousness in the 60s during the civil

rights movement and the Vietnam saga.

> A lot of my moral education came about because you were seeing people on the
> line. They were making decisions, they were doing things. ... the 60s were of
> course like a mixed bag, like any other decade. But there was moral fervor, but
> there was moral discussion or moral argument. It was in the world ... it was, I
> think... you know, one of those very exciting times ... where there were huge
> issues to be discussed and there were big things at stake. ... it was hard not to at
> least react to it. You didn't have to be a part of it, but ... it was in your face. So
> you had to react to it. ... I was in Wichita, Kansas, and St. Louis, Missouri ... but
> the same damn thing was happening all over the country. ...and then with
> disarmament, and you know, the war, and all that ... and serious discussion,
> seriously talking with your friends who were in Vietnam, coming back from it, as
> soldiers, and you in a very different place, and struggling.

All this serves to underscore the difficultly in communicating values when people

come from different life experience. Nonetheless, transformational leaders seem to have

a core belief that despite that variance, there are universal core values that can surface

if we can only engage the discourse. "There are universal values," said Steve, "and we

merely need to acknowledge them." How we do that will require stimulants to move the

conversation forward and specific conversational skills that we may learn from the

practices and speech actions of such leaders.

But before moving into that, a concluding point on the problem of impediments is

noteworthy. I refer to it as the multiplier effect that compounds the problem as a

confluence of impediments come into play. One's own impediment can often invoke an

impediment in the response of the other, creating a dysfunctional synergy that makes it

nearly impossible to retrieve any semblance of discourse that can evoke shared

meaning which, as I develop later, is a critical stimulant that moves the conversation

forward. The moral discourse deteriorates further. For instance, the rigid thinking or bigotry of one participant elicits an overly emotional response of anger based on equally rigid thinking on the part of the other. Participants in the conversation becoming entrenched, "digging in their heels." Similarly, a recollection of past attempts that were not fruitful, coupled with an increasing sense that the situation is beyond any prospect of being solved, adds to self doubt that only serves to reinforce a sense of lack of efficacy. Situations become exasperated. There is an exponential growth in communication breakdown and polarization, leading to increased hostilities and the breakdown of organizational and social resilience to withstand change. Social capital collapses under the pressure. Layer upon layer of compounding impediments constrain the conversation and lead to total dysfunction in the communication process and the collapse of the discourse.

All this seems to indicate that there are grave problems associated with values talk and communication in general. Some have argued persuasively that good communication rarely happens (Galloway, 2002). The risks of sabotage are compounded by missed messages, metamessages, misread intentions, blind sightedness, egoism, fears, ignorance, and the complexities of the non-verbal communications that accompany the spoken word.

And yet, transformational leadership seems to require values talk, given its emphasis on leaders' function as moral agents. A fundamental premise of my research is a belief that it is possible, demonstrating the "orientational" dimension of my qualitative inquiry (Patton, 1990). But to accomplish it, we need to rigorously employ the remedies that can overcome the impediments by positively stimulating the discourse in the hope that effective leadership can successfully empower participants to discover a new creativity that moves systems, structures, and organizations forward for the general advancement of the human lot. The realities of September 11th, a gross interruption in

my research journey, leaves me to think there is no other choice. The great undertaking must unfold, far more formidable than the greatest of scientific discoveries, more significant than the healing of AIDS or cancer, more sensational than the exploration of outer space. It is a matter of survival of the species. We simply cannot not do it.

Stimulants to the conversation

I now address the behaviors, dispositions, and motivations that positively stimulate moral conversation. As with impediments, the stimulants to the conversation can either motivate self participation (passive stimulant) or motivate others to participate in the discourse (active stimulant). These stimulants function as accelerating mechanisms and can offset the braking impact of impediments and move the conversation forward. Again, I draw a distinction between individual and social dynamics. The former serve as positive individual motivators while the latter are descriptive of the quality of social relationships and communication dynamics that positively stimulate the conversation. I note that in the case of impediments, the social dynamics are largely framed in the context of culture. However, in the case of stimulants, the social dynamics are better portrayed in the context of communication. Hence, I address in this section two kinds of stimulants: (1) individual motivators; and (2) social communicative stimulants.

As I mentioned earlier, I generally found that the participants were considerably more articulate about the impediments to moral discourse than about the positive dynamics that can stimulate the conversation. Hence, this section is somewhat sketchy in parts, particularly in the area of individual motivators. However, in the sections that follow, I will address more specific leader speech actions, styles, and practices that promote moral conversation. That body of data could have perhaps been incorporated into this section on stimulants. However, I have chosen to distinguish between the "big

strokes" (this section on stimulants) and the more descriptive rendering of the participants' concrete experiences in the following sections. For that reason, the data overlap across the sections. To the extent that they do demonstrates coherence that adds to the validity of the data.

<div align="center">Individual Motivators</div>

Three general individual motivators surfaced in the data. They were: (1) passion grounded in one's self mastery; (2) a capacity to take on risks; and (3) formative experiences from the past.

Leaders often described times they spoke with passion about deeply held beliefs. Passion can positively engage the moral conversation, so long as it was done in a manner that employs constructive communicative action. Participants described occasions they were moved to speak out on a matter that "stirred me deeply," "cut to the bone," or ignited a "fire in my belly." They spoke out of strong feelings, beliefs and core values because it "bothered me," and "stirred my conscience," and because one was compelled to speak out for "the right thing." David describes the phenomenon like this:

> In a moral dilemma, its like fire inside of me. I will sit there as long as I can handle it, and then it is like I reach a point, where I've got to speak. ... I think about Jeremiah, I believe it was said, it's just like fire shut up in my bones and if it doesn't come out, I feel my entire body will explode.

But the passion seems to be selective and is only demonstrated around certain issues that particularly drive the leader and motivate his or her action. Sarah spoke of several passions that motivated her leadership in a new position where she felt liberated to act on the basis of her core values. Jacob spoke of a particular "commitment" to "kids and families" as "that's what stirred my passions." Chuck described passions as long-bearing and persevering. "You should say those things that you feel strongly about," he said, "if given the opportunity to address them, however

many times ... you're supposed to do it." They are the issues, said Debbie, that we care deeply about. "Those are the ones that I go to battle for in a heartbeat."

Effective leaders seem to be able to recognize that there is a dark side to speaking passionately. If not checked, their speech action risks devolving into an impediment that can come across as reactive emotionalism, sometimes accompanied with anger and hostility that judges others and consequently kills the discourse. David described a capacity to safeguard against that danger and a "maturity" that "has helped me use words that I think will get the message across rather than getting the anger across."

Nonetheless, transformational leaders attempt to raise the moral consciousness of others by speaking from a maturity grounded in longstanding values and ideals that seem to run through their lifework and worldview. Because they are so deeply seated within the person, those passions are more than simply reactive. They drive the leaders' proactive engagement on related themes and issues. Passions are, in this sense, handles on the core values that serve to motivate leaders to engage with others in meaningful moral conversation. They point to the leader's sense of what constitutes the good and "right thing" to do in a given situation. They flow from the leader's ideals, identity, and life purpose. They are reflective of one's own sense of self-mastery. The leader knows that he thinks and values and speaks confidently, forthrightly and consistently from that self mastery in ways that deliberately seek to influence change. Jacob said it succinctly.

> I know who I am. I am extremely confident. ... I don't think that it's with arrogance. But I am extremely confident. I am extremely self-assured. ... I am confident that I have something to bring to the table ... that there is something in what I do and how I do it that can season in the environment that I am in.

A second factor that positively impacts the conversation is the leader's capacity to take on risk. Risk capacity can offsets the impediments that can constrain the

conversation. A heightened risk capacity overpowers the sense that the costs may not be worth the potential benefit. The greater one's capacity for risk, the more one can overcome feelings of non-efficacy and the more one is willing to incur known and unknown costs in hopes of effecting change.

Donna sees risk taking as an essential component of leadership. "To be a leader, you have to take the risk." She spoke of "courage" in overcoming fears and other impediments that can prevent one from speaking out. David took a risk when he publicly disagreed with the superintendent about the school bond levy issue during a meeting of principals.

> You're out here on this limb by yourself and you're sawing fast behind. ...he [the superintendent] was angry. And I sat there and said to myself, "Well, you've done it now!" ... But at that point, I really didn't care, because I felt I had to say it.

The urgency to speak and "the fire in the belly" overcomes the fear, the anxiety and other impediments that may otherwise hold one back. David took the risk, with no assurance as to the consequences that might result. Likewise, Chuck risked by voicing his objection to a conversation that was critical of a colleague's performance when that person was not present at the meeting to defend his actions. "I felt strongly about it," Chuck said, "and I really believed that I was right about the notion that you don't castigate people in public when they are not there." Despite his fears and anxieties, his passionate belief in what was right increased his capacity to take on the risk of the action. And so, he spoke out against what he perceived to be a moral wrong.

One's capacity for risk seems to be positively related one's passion and the perceived urgency of the situation. The more intensity one feels and the more important the matter seems, the more one is willing to take on the risk of incurring negative consequences. Those dynamics are reflected in Brian's struggle that eventually led him to address his concerns for an inclusive holiday party. He felt strongly about the issue, and in the end, he concluded that the matter was urgent and that he could make a

difference. He takes the risk to speak out even though he had fears about what might ensue. Ultimately, the leader's capacity to take on risk is sustained by a confidence in one's own values. Confidence in one's passions, combined with a sense of urgency, increases risk capacity. Similar to the calculus that causes some to withhold as they assess the costs over the benefits, risk-taking is a calculus that concludes that the reasons to speak outweigh the reasons to withhold.

Formative experiences from the past constitute a third factor that predispose leaders to enter into moral discourse. Those experiences typically relate to one's upbringing, education and developmental role models. I distinguish these past experiences from current "moral wells" that sustain one's continued moral development in adulthood. I address the latter in the final section of this chapter under leader practices. At this point, I simply underscore the influence of the past. This factor contrasts with negative past experiences that impede the conversation. Only here, the past experiences serve to positively influence and motivate future engagement in moral conversation. They represent well what Glendon and Blackenhorn (1995) call "seedbeds of virtue" and illustrate how family life, role models, neighborhoods and institutions build character and values in young people, and how they set the stage for a general predisposition to think and share reflectively with others about what constitutes the good.

The data illustrate numerous past experiences that empower leaders to talk about their values with others. Dan cites his experience growing up in Detroit and how "looking back" he can now relate to issues impacting race relations as he draws from that experience in conversations about contemporary situations. Similarly, Cindy has fond memories of the neighborhood she grew up in and remembers how vital the community center was years ago. Her moral advocacy for the redevelopment of the depressed neighborhood years later is rooted in her own experience and provides a path for her to identify with the current residents of the neighborhood. Jacob speaks in similar

terms as he tells how he had grown up in Jacksonville as a child and then moved away

before returning many years later. He recalls that despite the reality of segregation, he

enjoyed a nurturing neighborhood experience as a child growing up in a tightly knit

African American community.

> Durkeeville was where I grew up. ... The neighborhood experiences were such
> that there was value to who we were, at that time, as black people. We had
> teachers that expected a great deal of us. We had communities that were very
> close. We had aunts and uncles who were not family, all up and down the
> community ... so there was a sense of security about who we were.

It is evident that transformational leaders develop in the presence of adults who

actively practice values talk. Several participants told stories of being influenced in their

formative years by parents, teachers and other role models who regularly articulated

values. "My mother is just incredible," Elli said with a smile. "She's very well read ... and

loves to talk about the issues." Reflecting the same point, Herb said that we either

emulate people or we learn what not to do.

> I found my father to be so close-minded about anybody and everybody's
> perspective .... [but], my mother was the most trusting, the most loving individual
> that ever walked the face of the earth. ...She never said a single bad word about
> another soul in her life. She always trusted the good in every single individual
> that she ever came in contact with. She expected the best out of every single
> individual, that they would reciprocate to her in that particular fashion. ... I think
> my mother gave me a personality that allows me to be able to speak my mind,
> and to be able to speak up ...I still have this, my mother's side of me, who says
> you can always find some way to do something.

Joe's childhood experience was similar.

> I feel very blessed in my own life to have been around a mother who was an
> ethical activist and a grandfather who was a politician and a civic leader ... and to
> hear their conversations, to be involved ... and to do battle royal, as a teenager,
> with both my father and grandfather about civil rights.

Tim makes the same point about growing up in a family that seemed comfortable talking

the "give and take" about meaningful issues of the day.

> I think it probably has to go back to at least my own Dad, who although he's
> strong in his beliefs, is willing to confront beliefs, is willing to listen to others. ...
> Whenever we got together at family parties ... the first thing they would do is
> argue about what was the best way to get there. And the next thing that they

would do is jump to arguments about politics ... who should be running this, and who should be running that. And yet, they all loved each other, and they all got along. But you would think that they were at each other's throats .... And that's just the way that family picnics were. ... There would be somebody on one side, and somebody on the other.

Family members are not the only role models. Joe talked about the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King while growing up in the early 60s during the civil rights movement. Ryan talked about the sustaining moral influence of his past military experience. Herb and Debbie spoke of the moral influence of being educated in Catholic schools. Herb says that experience directly influenced the approach he took in engaging the judge who enraged the community by making public racist remarks.

> What I learned in school from some of the priests ... was the fact that if you don't like what somebody says, you can't change it by shouting at him from across the room. You have to go to their side of the room, give them credence that they had the right to say what they want. Everyone has the right to say something ... and then, say what you want them to see from your perspective, or a bigger perspective.

The past can also set the stage for a leader's particular style and approach to moral discourse. Herb's style, very much oriented to solving problems, finds its roots in early family life where, he said,

> Even my brothers will say that I was the one who solved the problems between my mother and father, and my grandfather, and everything else. My dad was very narrow minded, and so I was the one who had to intervene and was used as the one who had to solve the family problems from an early age.

By contrast, Steve's style of moral discourse tends to be more philosophical, reflective and soul-searching, demonstrating his more solitary approach to moral insight as he discovered in youth.

> I basically rejected from a very early age the prevailing societal view of things, whether it was church, whether it was whatever else ... and knew that there had to be a higher order of things than the way people operated and thought. ... I would go to the library and read different religious books and so on. And I think even though moral leadership should be taught to the masses, I can't say I was ever taught that. ...I definitely didn't pick it up from peers and my various teachers . I think I did it through thought and through relating with writings of various things.

Finally, Joe reminded the focus group that the past teaches us in still another way. "We learn from past mistakes," he said. Over time, leaders come to discover what approaches work and what do not. Engaging with others in moral conversation, like any skill, improves over time and with practice.

<div align="center">Social Communicative Stimulants</div>

I identified five social-communicative factors that positively stimulate the conversation. They are: (1) safe places for the conversation; (2) an open communication process; (3) the emergence of common ground through shared meaning; (4) empathic listening and perspective taking; and (5) trusting relationships that build community. These communicative dynamics are mutually reinforcing, creating a synergy that positively moves the conversation forward. They are cyclical, feeding back and forth between reflection and action, continually shaping and re-shaping the dynamics of a morally reflective community. The process is recursive and mutually reinforcing, creating a dynamism that spirals the conversation forward. At any point, the conversation can be short-circuited if an impediment becomes sufficiently large to break down the momentum of stimulants that energize the conversation.

Participants repeatedly spoke of the need for safe places where people can feel free to voice their beliefs without fear of retribution. The dialogue does not rest primarily on the strength of one's convictions, but on the sense that one is accepted in a welcoming, open, receptive and safe environment.

Ray described safe place as a trusting environment freed from the anxiety of having one's intentions misunderstood. Sarah spoke of her efforts to develop a school principals' center where principals can gather in a place that they "owned" and where they could talk freely about their genuine needs. Principals told her how important it was to structure the center in a way that was not affiliated with the school district. The

inference, admitted Sarah, was "a lack of trust" within formal institutional settings that tend to inhibit genuine open conversation.

Donna told a moving story of her experience with a camp program for children from families that cope with severe physical disabilities. She described the dynamics of openness on the final evening of camp when children gathered around a campfire and told moving personal stories of their experiences. The metaphor of the "campfire" struck a chord and was resonated in other focus groups as well. Larry captured the image as a safe place to engage with others in moral conversation.

> Being together around the campfire, you take a meditative perspective, where there is lots of open space in which you feel secure, in which the faces of the folks with which your conversing are all lit, all seen, all open, and you are free to be yourself. ... You are speaking from a position of security and you are OK with vulnerability.

During several interviews, participants spoke of staff training and development events, especially those conducted in an off-site retreat setting, that seemed to create safe environments where colleagues can step out of their normal roles and functions and enter into a safe zone of creative conversation. Safe places for conversation occur in other places, like traveling in cars with colleagues, where there is a certain intimacy created by being in close proximity over an extended time. Safe places are also evident in intentional conversational venues that presume voluntary participation. The conversation "goes deep" as trust and mutual respect builds. Settings like Fran's study circle and Tim's Wednesday evening group set up safe places where folks can afford to take the risks to "speak from their own wells." The fact that values talk occurs more often in the private arena of friends and families is precisely because those settings are perceived as more safe than are the settings of the workplace and civil society. That brings to the foreground the challenge to find ways to make for similar "safe places" in the workplace and in civil society.

But there is a counterpoint where safe places can become counterproductive and serve as nesting places for the comfort zones of parochialism, self-serving introspection, and group-think that impede the open discourse. This dynamic illustrates the dialectical polarity that often moves between impediments and stimulants. A stimulant can easily be distorted and become an impediment. For instance, one's passion can be counterproductive if it is rooted in fixed ideology rather than one's sense of purpose and self mastery. The same groups that function as safe places for meaningful conversation that shape and clarify our beliefs and values can become the very obstacles to more open conversation among diverse participants. Nonetheless, transformational leaders who are committed to values talk seem to have a sense of how to create safe spaces and use them to further meaningful conversation.

The next stimulant to the communicative process is a natural extension of safe places. Because the environment is safe, participants can afford to be open. This openness is marked first by a presumption of the good intention of all participants. Secondly, the openness calls for honest sharing that suspends judgment and is non-coercive. Together, those elements set the stage for constructive moral conversation. By creating an openness and receptivity to the other, those factors set the table of discourse.

A posture of openness first assumes the good intention of all who voluntarily participate in the conversation, thus mitigating the problems of intentionality and fears of malevolence. There is a fundamental orientation that not only accepts the other, but genuinely tolerates the perspective of the other, respecting the other's view of the "good." As Jacob put it,

> There is the necessity to not just accept or tolerate, but to give value to .... and it is only when we give value to the other person's perspective, that we can begin to move into that arena of not being intimidated.

Surprisingly, this presumption that respects the "good" of the other was, on several occasions, framed by participants in terms of a liberal versus conservative approach to moral dialogue. As Herb saw it, "liberal people will tolerate and listen to another point of view, but the conservatives, they have their mind made up." There is an inkling here that "liberal" means something more than is typically understood. There is a clear communitarian overtone. Rather than simply being a political posture that gives primacy to the values of individualism evidenced in a predisposition to individual rights, self development, and free enterprise, Herb's notion of liberalism is not self-directed. It is other-directed and presumes the worth and dignity of other participants in the conversation. What makes his approach to moral discourse "liberal" is an attitude of receptivity and reciprocity that respects others' perception of the good. This is classic democratic liberalism at its best. Because it is other-directed, it is a responsive liberalism in the tradition of communitarianism. It sets the stage for open dialogue by presuming the dignity of all individual participants and by valuing the views of all who partake in the conversation. In terms of Karp's (1997) typology, communitarian individualists may be more predisposed to moral discourse than communitarian social conservatives.

Sarah alluded to the same idea as she contrasted the prospect for moral discourse in her previous position in the public school district with that of her current position at the university. "The university climate," she said, "is more liberal than anything I encountered in the school district, where I might have been reluctant to broach sensitive issues." Yet, she pointed out how the school district was ironically more diverse than the university in external protocols that typically define diversity. For instance, the school board had greater racial and gender diversity among its employees than did the university. This contra-indication, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, illustrates the limitations of organizational policy. Though such policy may be politically

correct, it does not assure genuine respect for diversity and differences in ways that promote openness for meaningful values talk.

Openness is also evidenced by honest sharing in ways that do not judge others. Transformational leaders are able to minimize chances that they might be perceived as intimidating or confrontative, dynamics that surely undercut the dialogue. By being honest while suspending judgment, leaders enhance their prospect for eliciting reciprocal honesty from others. The conversation is nuanced by a careful balance that respects the other's values and yet allows one to honestly communicate one's own beliefs in ways that are non-judgmental and noncoercive. The conversation respects the freedom of each participant, a point underscored by Eric in the cliché, "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." Larry described the dynamic as dealing with people as "they really are." The following discussion in our interview illustrates the point.

> You asked me earlier, how I dealt with someone who is obviously pretty ego-driven and not very compassionate. Well, I deal with them by honoring their ego-drivenness, and saying, "Well, you know, I hear what you're saying. It sounds to me like your primary consideration is yourself and your fortune.

Larry was not judging the other, bur rather amplifying and feeding back his perception of the other's values. Not only that, he respected those values in the other. He went on to say,

> And the next thing to do is to honor that [the other's value]. OK? I respect that. [I said to him], "You've got the Midas touch. And the Midas touch has an intrinsically wonderful value in some environments. King Midas was essential to economic prosperity in his kingdom. [But], my question for you, ... "are King Midas' behaviors those which you want to practice in all environments? Is that what you want to be known for in fifty years? If not, what is?" So, you start out by being honest and just naming what is, and being comfortable with the reality of that, without making a value judgment. ... That's where I have a values discussion ... is to approach it without values judgment.

The point seems to be that we often presume that in order to be nonjudgmental, we cannot disagree with the other and be honest about our own beliefs. The challenge is to withhold judgment while still expressing one's own values vis-à-vis the other's. The

combination of honesty and acceptance of the other blunts the intimidation. The

campfire metaphor is relevant again on this point of honesty. It prompts Donna's

reflection about children's natural capacity for uninhibited honesty. She recalls the story

of the camp program for children in families who deal with multiple sclerosis.

> I can remember sitting around the campfire with 50 or 60 of them ... its amazing
> how honest they are! I mean, they will tell you everything ... they will talk about
> how "it's my fault that my mom has MS," and "I am sick of my mom being in bed
> all day," ... and... "I am 13 years old; I don't want to change my father's diapers;
> that's not what I am supposed to do." .... And they'll tell every single person
> sitting around the campfire that kind of stuff. So we talk about that whole
> campfire thing ... this is the real thing, this is the God's honest truth. And there
> are no inhibitors at all ... just being open and talking, having open dialogue about
> the good, the bad and the ugly ... nobody deems one different than the other, or
> treats one differently .... It's just amazing. It's just kind of interesting, that this
> keeps coming up [the campfire image] ... I can't stop thinking about it ... that
> when you sit around the campfire in open space, that's where that kind of
> dialogue is able to happen ... and it doesn't matter what color you are, what size
> you are, what religion you are ... and God knows if you are between the ages of 8
> and 13, you are brutally honest and say what you think of anything.

Given a safe place and an openness that builds on honest, non-judgmental and

non-coercive exchange of values, moral discourse can move forward in prospects of

discovering emerging common ground. The data shows that the common ground of

moral discourse surfaces in three distinct ways. I am suggesting that each illustrates a

different level and intensity and that each level requires a progressive advancement in

communication capacity.

The first level is the common ground of an issue or problem. Parties gather

around a common issue that motivates their collaborative involvement. The arena is

typically a workplace setting or public meeting where participants gather to address a

specific concern. That agenda constitutes a forum that creates a venue for moral

discourse around a situational event. The meeting is centered on a specific problem or

issue. Though each participant is driven by self interest, the focal point of the moral

discourse attempts to unpack a strategic resolution to the problem that meets with the

satisfaction of all parties involved. The challenge here is to attain the "win-win" of

creative compromise. The motivation is practical and driven with the need to find a solution that all can accept. The discourse is marked by a collaborative effort to solve the problem. Each has a role to play in the resolution, each knowing "if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem."

Carol spoke of her efforts with the city's Inter-Faith Council to develop an educational program "so we can focus in on what issues we all have in common, and build on that." Others cited community organizing initiatives evidenced in the practice of citizen's advocacy groups, neighborhood coalitions and community development groups. Herb gave an account of an experience when he deflected the criticism of a woman who objected to his leadership as an outsider in efforts to redevelop her blighted inner city neighborhood. He creatively engaged the woman in a values conversation that brought them together in a united commitment to solve a problem that they both cared about. His appeal to the woman served to focus the dialogue in a constructive manner so that both parties could work together toward the successful resolution of the problem.

> I had a lady over in LaVilla one night tell me that she didn't like the fact that "you rich white folks come in here and try to tell us how to run our community." And instead of having her stand in the back and shout at me, I asked her to come up and sit next to me. ... And so what I did was take her out of her environment where she felt safe. It's surprising when people have to stand up in front of other people and defend what they say. She no longer shouted, because, now all of a sudden, she's gonna get into a debate with me, in order to solve the situation. And I told her that I was there on a moral issue, because I think its morally wrong what LaVilla is like and how it has been handled, and how we got people living in society, you know, in the condition that they are in. So I said to her, "I am here to help solve that. Why are you here?"

> I pulled her in, and had she gone off and just been against me just for the fact that I am a "rich white folk," as she called me, ... so consequently, now all of a sudden, she found out that I got rid of all of the labels and now we got down to that moral common ground that we tried to get at. ... And I said, "Now, I want to solve this situation. If you don't want me here, I don't need to be here. But I am here to solve a situation, to help this community to solve what we've got here, either through planning, through influence, through trying to find a common ground that we can ... get a plan for the community so we can have economic viability. That's why I am here." And I said, "If you want to be a part of that and want me to be apart of it, I'll stay. If you don't want me to, I can leave." ... and then all of a sudden she started talking.

At the second level, common ground surfaces in the context of common life experiences that can becomes the basis of shared values. As conversational participants share stories of their life experience, they can get to know one another and begin to identify with each others' experiences. Mutual respect builds as the "ice starts to break down," said David, " ... and I am going to hear in there, "Gee, whiz ... maybe we are more alike than I thought! ... and then we can start moving to something in time called a common good." He affirmed his earlier comment about "getting behind our ideologies" as we discover the genuine person within the other.

Participants told stories that illustrate the same idea. Herb described a conversation with a local Ku Klux Klan group who objected to his criticism of the judge who made public racist comments. He appealed to them on the common ground of their Christian faith.

> The Ku Klux Klan asked me to come out to [a meeting] ... I mean I didn't know it was one till I got there ... but they said, "How dare you do this to our judge whom we believe everything that he said?" And what I went back to was ... the definition of values that the Chamber put out at that time [in response to the judge's comments]. I remember sitting in a long room with about 25-30 guys ... and this guy is slamming his fist down on the table ... and said, "How dare you say this! We are God-fearing Christian people." That kind of opened the door for me, because I said, "Can I talk about your Christian principles?" ... I asked this guy to come up next to me, and I went over every single statement [in the chamber of commerce values statement] and I said, "What do you disagree with what I've got to say?" ... and he said, "Nothing". He couldn't shoot a hole into basic respect for other people ...

Similarly, Joe described how he promoted a life changing values conversation among volunteers in a community homeless coalition. He attempted to bridge the lives of the providers and consumers of the program by getting them to share life experiences.

> All I had to do was get them [the volunteers] to talk to the people [the homeless]. ... as people got involved with these people [the homeless] ... people would come back and they would say, "Well, that was just like, you know, he's like my son," or, "you know, this is like my grandchildren.

Ryan illustrated the same point by reflecting on his experience in the military.

In the military, you get thrust in, and you may be rooming with an African American... and you learn that they are just like you. And there's a lot more common ground than there is before ... So that closeness of living in a berthing compartment with 50 other guys or whatever else, and all kind of backgrounds.

As the base of shared experience expands, participants can begin to discover shared values that underlie those common life experiences. If the dialogue is allowed to go deeper, it can move to the third level, where common ground finds its richest fruit in the attainment of mutual identification around shared values and beliefs. At this level, common ground takes root in the common ground of shared meaning. It is the most difficult level to attain because it goes beyond the "middle ground" of mere compromise that can be bland and lack genuine commitment to one another. It precipitates a sense of solidarity and community that leads to moral action on behalf of the common good. I am suggesting that the heart of moral conversation lies at this level of discourse.

If the conversation fails to reach this level, the common good is elusive. If there is any prospect for a common good, it would seem incumbent that there be enough shared meaning to surface a common ground of shared values. The challenge is most formidable. If the conversation is to accomplish this aim, shared values must be more than the aggregate of diverse opinions. Rather, shared values become "an authoritative interpretation of the community morality that bears on the proper character of the community" (Bell, 1993, p. 63).

Though the end is elusive, participants consistently held to a belief that common universal values exist. Elli affirmed, "There's a basic value of respecting each other ... it's a universal value." Those values often are the common denominator across diverse religious worldviews. Quoting Gandhi, Herb said, "Show me a good Catholic and I'll show you a good Jew, show you a good Hindu, and show you a good Buddhist." He seemed to be saying that common values are the substance of shared meaning and that

those values can be universalized. True religion integrates and affirms the shared values that constitute the common good.

David engaged his faculty in attempts to unpack shared values when "we start talking about what's really valuable to us. ... from out of there, some sense of shared values and whatever behaviors those shared values will start." And Patricia, the school board member, talked about the challenge of mining shared values in the secular discourse of public policy.

> It has been interesting to watch the ins and outs of serving as a public official and often times having to express values but not always in a Christian context, but in those generic values to which I think most people in this community subscribe, whether they're Jewish or Hindu or Buddhist or whatever. ... There is, in my opinion, a very strong core of common values to which this community subscribes.

Patricia went on to talk at length about a particular relationship she has nurtured with another school board member who is generally viewed as her political antagonist. Her tone exhibited a distinct sense of joy and surprise that conveyed her deep sense of satisfaction in her accomplishment.

> We've had an interesting pull of philosophy with a fellow board member of mine, who was elected the same exact time I was ... an ultra conservative ... we were probably the two extremes in philosophy on the Board. It's been interesting that we've danced a dance for six and half years and we've danced a dance and have realized that our core values are almost identical.

Both Patricia and Elli made reference to the School Board's resolution of the sex education conflict as members came to uphold the goal of sexual abstinence as a common value that they all shared. Disagreements, polarity of political views and conflict made way for the emergence of an alternative solution built on common values. Conflict is surely a part of the path, as Larry reminded the focus group. But equally so is a will to find a solution that honors the core values that all can subscribe to.

There is a final note to this discussion about common ground. There is a dark side of consensus that settles for the "middle ground" of "win-win." Consensus, so often

held as sacrosanct in the rubrics of group process, is often incapable of a discourse that moves beyond the superficial level of a utilitarian common ground born of proceduralism. I am suggesting that the impulse to attain consensus can actually be an impediment to substantive moral conversation when it functions under strict time constraints and is ritually defined by processes and rules that control the conversation. Several participants described their experience serving on one or another civic task force or study group where deeper levels of moral discourse were limited. The result was an inability to attain a deeper level of common ground and shared meaning. The consequence had the effect of diluting the work of the group and minimizing results.

The aims of shared values seem to require forms of discourse that demand more than consensus. Aims for consensus can be perfunctory, superficial and singularly driven by productivity and desired ends, having limited residual effect to sustain organizational resilience. Emphasis is on externalities, exemplified in George's comments. "We back off, or try to find the middle, or try to recognize that this [process] is not going to go anywhere." The process seems to stalemate as participants come up against "our individual ideologies." At that point, Marsha quipped, "Because you are having to come to consensus!" "Right, right!" responded George. "People want to be on the winning side, to be a part of the majority," he said. It seems that participants let go of their own beliefs in order to honor the consensus process. Though the result may be an end product "that folks can live with," there is no assurance that the end genuinely serves the common good.

The problem with consensus is that it so often plays to the lowest common denominator and impoverishes the deeper reflectivity that demands comfortableness with ambiguity, uncertainty, judgment suspension, and the juxtaposition of opposites. It pulls back from the stretch required of critical thinking that is integral and holistic, a concept that will be further explored under leader practices. In the end, this limited notion

of consensus unduly focuses the process on immediate ends and results and risks shortchanging the dialogue process.

Shared meaning cannot be so easily delimited. The journey may require folks to move beyond minimalist approaches to consensus that constrain shared values to the lowest common denominator. Joe suggested that there are higher models of consensus that may require participants to actually change their viewpoint in order to maintain solidarity with the community. He captured this communitarian orientation in his critique of consensus.

> Consensus doesn't mean that you always come up with an answer that everybody is OK with. But because you are part of a community, you are working hard at making that community, so that community is serving different people in different ways ... On one issue, maybe people are willing to give up on something that wouldn't be their cup of tea at all ...because they are getting something else over here.

Joe acknowledges that the community is comprised of diverse players with diverse self interests. But his point seems to be that community itself is a value. One may give consensus to something that one may not value or believe in, but nonetheless accept, because one has a fundamental value for and respect for the goodness of the community itself. One's capacity to practice such self-abdication presumes that one's needs are sufficiently met at a minimum level that sustains commitment to the group.

The distinction is nuanced. In terms of leadership styles, the practice of consensus building might itself be viewed as transactional or transformational. Consensus is transactional when it is attained in the exchange of a mutual "win-win." It acknowledges and meets each participants' distinct, separate, and independent self interests. Yet transformational consensus seems to point to a decision process that stirs moral change within the participants themselves. The end is not simply the policy decision, but the impact the discourse has on one's own continued value formation process. It is fundamentally "other directed" and community centered, rising above

individual interests to deeper ends that genuinely serve mutual interests. Those are the

shared values that become the stock of common ground around which participants

construct the fabric of community

Common ground seems to require _empathic listening,_ a fourth component in the

social-communicative process that stimulates the conversation. Empathic listening

enables mutual perspective taking and moves through stages of acknowledgement,

validation, resonance and solidarity where participants become mutually invested in one

another's well being. It is not unlike Habermas' (1990b, p. 39) concept of "sympathetic

empathy," a notion which he develops as an extension of Kohlberg's "ideal role taking"

based on the work of G. H. Mead (1934). Through mutual perspective-taking, each

participant in the dialogue identifies with the other and is "able to take the precise

perspective" of the other, through which each comes to perceive the "expectations,

interests, and value orientations" of the other (Habermas, 1990b). For the dialogue to

progress constructively, the process cannot be one-sided. In Habermas' theory of

communicative action, it must be reciprocal.

To listen empathically is to be able to "see through the eyes of the other," as

Herb said, and to understand others in the light "of their own personal stories." Cindy

described it as a process of entering into the other's space. As the listener finds points of

identification with the other, the common ground begins to surface.

> What we strive to do is to understand and sympathize with the people that we
> serve, the people that we lead, the people that we manage. ... We have to
> become sensitive and break down barriers. And that can't happen until you have
> walked in their footsteps, until you have sat in their homes and until you have sat
> down and shared a meal with that person, and you determine that they really are
> like me.

Empathic listening in the past seems to equip transformational leaders with skills

to better understand others who hold different values in present situations. They are able

to suspend judgment as they tune into the other's experience. Herb reflected on how his

father saw the world. Years later, he has been able "to see through my father's eyes" and that has helped him to better understand others who don't think like he does. When he encounters those people, instead of judging them, as he says, "I put my dad's head on my shoulders many times, and I have a tendency to be able to understand what is going on."

This capacity to suspend judgment seems to interface with the capacity to understand the other's perspective. If one can really see through the eyes of the other, one can validate the other's perspective without necessarily agreeing with it. Jacob, the protestant minister, said that his own values often feel compromised when he feels coerced to pray without reference to Jesus in public civic settings. Yet, he said to a Jewish woman in the focus group, "I certainly understand what you are saying [her comments about feeling excluded] ... I understand how you feel." If he were unable to take on the other's perspective, it seems he would not be able to withhold judgment. The two are inextricably linked. Jacob, an African American, spoke of how he reacted to a white person's racist remarks.

> To be able to look outside of myself, to look at you, and I know that we are
> different, with different experiences, and to say, "I don't like what you say, I don't
> like what you think, but I value you as a human being and your experience ...
> and your experience can help enhance who I am." That's a different challenge!

There is a critical point here where empathic listening can serve to create common ground even when participants do not have similar life experiences. In the absence of that shared life experience, empathic listening can bridge the chasm of differences caused by variances in the participants' culture and history. To that end, it can overcome significant impediments that block moral conversation. Without it, participants may assume that real communication is impossible simply because the other has had different life experience.

Fran illustrated this problem when she talked about her own experience as a participant in a race relations study circle. She expressed a belief that one cannot have empathy with others without having similar life experience. She spoke of the experience of two white males in the group who admitted that they had never been the victims of prejudice. In Fran's view, "They couldn't have any empathy because it just was something that they couldn't have felt." I am suggesting that such thinking is problematic in that it leads to a fatalist conclusion that blocks a collective will based on shared understanding and perspective taking. To the contrary, empathic listening allows one to genuinely "see through the eyes of the other" and enter into solidarity with the other's experience, even if one has not actually had a similar experience. To that end, although there may not be a common ground of shared life experience, there is nonetheless some prospect of discovering a common ground of shared values as each participant grows in a capacity for perspective taking that comes to see the others' expectations, interests, and value orientations. I am suggesting that empathic listening can compensate for differences in life experience by facilitating a vicarious engagement with others' experience. Without that prospect, there is little hope for genuine collaboration in seeking solutions to the countless social ills that victimize one or another segment of society.

Patricia illustrated how this dynamic can overcome a difference in life experience. Though there was no indication that she herself had ever suffered sexual harassment in the workplace, she was still able to speak on behalf of those who had that experience.

> I think that what I did was right a wrong. ... I sensed a great injustice with the statements that had been made to those three teachers who had had the courage to come forward. ... and I looked at them, and I looked at their faces, and I thought someone has to speak up for them as well.

Empathic listening allows participants to resonate with each other's values. Elli talked of how the board members came to adopt a policy despite the outward

appearance of competing political perspectives. They had come to a point in the discourse where they could say, "Gosh, we believe that too!" Participants would speak of conversations that led to "light bulbs turning on" and "eye opening perspectives." Unimagined alternatives prompt nodding heads and whispered "yeses" that compound the waves of resonance and build one upon the other toward collective will formation and shared meaning.

Without empathic listening, the speaker's statements cannot be validated by the other and the values implicit in the speaker's comments are lost. This principle of validation seems to be pivotal in the dialogue process. Participants told numerous stories where validation empowered the speaker to stay in the conversation, when otherwise they may have pulled back. David's feelings of being vulnerable when he risked being "out on a limb" at the principals' meeting are suddenly validated by first one person, and then others, creating a floodgate effect that changed the course of the meeting. The consequence bore good fruit as the superintendent reconsidered his approach to the problem of why the bond levy vote had not succeeded. In Marsha's case at the insurance company, somebody raised their hand and said in response to her comment, "Marsha is absolutely right." The group successfully worked through the problem. The point here is that in both cases, had no one validated David and Marsha, the values discourse may have been blocked and no change may have occurred.

Resonance, validation and solidarity are all the result of empathic listening. When they occur, moral conversations seem to float, shifting to and fro as they purposefully pursue some yet unrealized meaning in the horizon. If allowed to continue and move forward, there seems to a be point of convergence where meaning-making, at some level, is attained. Communication is enhanced as participants "pickup and connect" with one another's sentiments, all the while building a ground of shared meaning. The dynamics of the focus groups illustrated that very point. Key ideas seemed to surface

gradually, like symphonic movements, beginning with subtle overtures, then turning

gracefully in the give and take of shared experiences and sentiments. The significance

of an idea or experience was often marked by repeated verbal references and nonverbal

glances back to what a particular person had said, validating and resonating one or

another prompting idea or story. As the conversational dance progressed, ownership of

values would separate from one or another individual and increasingly take on a group

identification. The whole dynamic seemed to illustrate well Habermas' (1990a) notion of

a moral conversation moving toward "collective will formation."

Empathy that resonates and then validates, gives shape to a collective will that

paves the way for solidarity in committed action on behalf of the common good. If

empathy is feeling with others, solidarity is acting with others. To the extent that

transformational leadership is about "an influence relationship among leaders and their

collaborators who intend real change that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1993),

that moral action requires solidarity. The significance of empathic listening is the key to

the transformative process. Both leaders and followers dance the dance in a discourse

of meaning making. Empathic listening is the key. As Joe said of the members of the

homeless coalition who had risked getting to know the personal stories of the homeless

themselves, "They were transformed."

A final element in the communication process centers on the quality of the inter-

personal relationships among the participants in the conversation. It seems that one

cannot have dialogue about values without genuinely valuing the participants who share

in the dialogue. "It's all about relationships," said Sarah. She looked with excitement

toward her current ventures in establishing a principals center at the University.

> I felt it instinctively. …that's been borne out time and time again. …The
> relationships that I've built over that career and the trust that I developed with my
> peers in the school district has been one of the things that's carried me.
> …There's a trust level that's been developed over that period of time.

"Relationships are everything" said Cindy. "The biggest thing I have learned in leadership is the fact that a lot of times we forget to build relationships." Elli reminded the focus group of Covey's (1989) dictum that "relationships are the number one thing." Herb underscored the point again: "The only thing you've got is families and friends."

As those relationships grow in trust and mutual respect, so grows the quality and depth of the conversation. Constructive moral discourse seems to require communities of committed persons who have grown to value and appreciate one another's differences and are generally involved in each others well being. Cindy said that we cannot really come to know people until we meet them "in their own space" and hear them talk about their values, their hopes, and their beliefs. That is the very "stuff" of moral conversation. As people share values, social capital expands. Community is formed as solidarity and group commitment intensifies through social capital gains. Participants are committed not only to the group, but to individual member's well being.

As values talk deepens and social capital expands, the group is better equipped to maintain organizational resilience in times of crisis and change. The bonds of relationships and community provide a well of resources from which to draw. Participants know one another and are known by one another. It is less easy to hide behind ideology and anonymity. It is less easy to label others as the enemy or demonize them. In times of brokenness, alienation and adversity, participants are more likely to be motivated by a desire for reconciliation and forgiveness, simply because they have more social stock in one another. They are so invested. Joe alluded to the prospect of forgiveness.

> It's crucial [forgiveness] ... And that's why you got to have community because, you know, if it's just episodic interaction, you see, then there is not much room for forgiveness. ... I don't not mean that people can never forgive strangers ... I suppose we all do it every day in some small way. ... But I think the deeper forgivenesses and the deeper learnings have to come out of an abundant, organic, growing kind of community. I don't think they come out of ex nihil.

Herb described how the quality of his relationship with a colleague who comes

from a very different cultural background is such that they "trust each other so much

there is nothing we can say that would hurt one another." Jacob describes a similar

trusting relationship with a woman he often engages in values talk while serving on a

community planning task force on juvenile crime. "We became antagonists at the table,"

he said. But he went on to describe that the quality of their relationship was such that

> We were able to embrace and she was able to say, "I don't agree with you, but I
> hear what you're saying." And I could say to her, "I don't agree with you either,
> but I deeply respect your beliefs.

Bonded in trust and mutual respect, participants seem to be better able to deal

with conflict that would otherwise fracture group cohesion. Relationships and the

resulting community offsets the anonymity that more readily harbors judgment and

condemnation of others' beliefs. By getting to know the person, just not their external

actions, "we see through others' eyes" and come to understand their underlying values

and perspectives. There is a symbiotic relationship between the discourse and the

process of trust building. "The trust is developed through the discourse," said Elli. Herb

regularly solicits the opinion of his subordinates and because of that, they are confident

of his respect for them. The result, he say, is that "you end up with a better situation."

When added together, the elements of positive communicative process create

impetus for change. As relationships develop, participants are able to risk letting go of

constraining ideas. They enter into change more freely. Elli described her efforts to

develop a relationship with a colleague with whom she has many differences of opinion.

> Barbara and I were like this <she spreads her hands far apart> ...When she
> came on the board we were just at opposite ends. And it really was a fascinating
> process ... I never thought we could ever have a conversation about anything.
> But we have developed a relationship. ... At first, you would have seen her as
> someone who is very rigid, would not move, would not be open minded. ... [but]
> because we developed a trusting relationship, ... she has changed her views on
> a lot of things. Yet we also agreed to disagree. We had some wonderful
> conversations about beliefs.

Open values talk marked by a posture of listening, trust and openness among trusting relationship creates not only common ground, but fertile ground from which new thoughts and creative change can sprout. The fruit of the conversation is the bonding among participants and the formation of meaningful relationships that are the precursor to forming organizational cultures composed of moral communities (Sergiovanni, 1994), a concept that will be developed further in Chapter Five.

These positive stimulants to the moral conversation are further explicated in the final section of this chapter, where the focus is on actual leader practices. They also demonstrate certain elements of Habermas' "ideal speech situation" as discussed in the literature review. But by way of summary, the following story told by David is particularly illustrative of how these elements interface. David, an African American himself, tells the story when a distraught white female student walked into his office to express her misgivings about the school's annual events marking African American history month.

> She said to me, "Why is it that when the African American students talk, it has to be a blaming, an aggressive kind of something ..." And my initial reaction was, "well, I didn't see that in it ..." But she came in, in fact, she sat on the sofa, here, right there. I said, "come on, lets talk about it." She had tears. And she says, "I didn't do anything. And I am sick and tired of being blamed for what's happening to black people." She said, "and this doesn't mean that I am prejudiced, when I say I am tired ... I am tired. Yes, I have friends who are black, but I still don't like being in this guilt kind of thing." And I listened to her.

> She left, and I thought about what she had said, and I said, "you know, she has a point." Because we aren't going to build friendships, we aren't going to tear down those barriers of anger as long as we are in a blaming mode. I am blaming you for what happened to us 200 years ago, and you weren't even thought of! ... So when I came back the next day, I thought through it and I saw her in the hall, and I called her, and I said, "you're right." I said, "we aren't getting anywhere with that ... because that is not a dialogue." ... it's become a debate. And debates are not usually very helpful.

The communication has many of the marks discussed above. The positive dynamics of the conversation begin with a fundamental presumption of the good intentions of both participants. This demonstrates a liberal posture that recognizes the

self worth of the other and of the other's perspective of what constitutes the good. It positions one to be open, present and attentive, to genuinely listen to the other. Because it begins with the presumption of good intentions, the process can operate in a field of openness that builds trust as shared meaning develops. The participants become transparent and are seen by one another. The student was unabashedly honest while David suspended his judgment, despite his first inclination. David, in particular, is able to practice empathic listening as he comes to take on the student's perspective. Finally, he freely responds to her, not blaming her or coercing her in any fashion, but rather validating her value, affirming her perspective, and so building a trusting relationship.

Though he has a different cultural perspective and cannot have the white student's life experience, nonetheless he seems to vicariously enter into her space and see things through her "set of eyes" as he comes to understand what she feels and why she feels that way. Once so validated, he can stand in solidarity with the student. At that point the two stand on common ground. Through it all, they have engaged each other's person and have built a relationship that is by all accounts based on trust and mutual respect. The meaningful relationship is born of the shared meaning that is the fruit of the discourse. In the end, their friendship is affirmed.

Speech Action, Style and Function

In this section I continue to unpack the dynamics of moral discourse by first attempting to construct a typology of particular speech actions that leaders use in their practice of moral conversation. From there, I go on to suggest two contrasting leadership styles that transformational leaders may use as they engage others in moral reflectivity. Those two styles are further defined in terms of several distinguishing functions served by particular speech actions. These constructs are based on the data drawn from the

participants' stories as they were shared in the focus groups and further explicated in the follow-up interviews

<u>Positive and Negative Speech Actions</u>

The data demonstrate three positive speech actions that engage moral conversation as well as three negative speech actions that are non-engaging. The three positive actions are initiation, intervention and response. Each stimulates and engage others in moral discourse, either starting the conversation or keeping it going. Each action calls others to recognize and become attentive to a values dimension that points to a moral conflict or evokes a higher level of moral judgment (Oser, 1986). A description of these positive speech actions follows, along with illustrative examples drawn from the data.

The most direct of the leader speech actions is that of <u>initiation</u>. In that context, the leader consciously initiates discussion on a previously undiscussed item, and does so in ways that legitimate values talk and stimulate shared moral reflectivity among the conversation participants. In initiation, one brings up the issue, creates the venue, or sees the potential venue opportunity and deliberately acts on it by prompting the conversation. Speech actions that initiate moral discourse raise the issue for the first time to the consciousness of other participants. They are marked by the leader's deliberate attempt to raise a value-laden concern in the context of some form of public discourse.

Examples of initiating speech actions included George's comments at a staff meeting where he prompted a conversation that led to his company's adoption of the Martin Luther King holiday. Cindy started a community wide conversation that eventually led to the city's commitment to invest redevelopment dollars in her old neighborhood. Because she spoke up, "people actually started to pay attention" and got involved. And Peggy initiated a values conversation with a colleague while the two of them were

driving to a school site to review the performance records of a federal grant program. She prompted the discourse by simply asking the question, "Have you ever seen the results of where this money is going?" In another story, she started a lunch room conversation among her staff by sharing a personal experience prompted by a current news story about sexual harassment in the workplace. In each of these scenarios, the leader makes a statement or asks a question that initiates a conversation where people begin to reflect on their values and beliefs.

A second speech action is intervention within a conversation already begun. If the talk to that point has been factual, with no particular value context, the leader intervenes with a value statement or question that raises the discourse to the level of moral reflectivity. If the conversation has already been at the level of moral discourse, the leader's intervention sustains the moral reflectivity and carries it forward. Examples abounded in the participants' stories. In many cases, they took the form of an objection or clarifying comment that related to the prior statement of another individual. For instance, Dan intervened in the living room discussion about the Detroit race riots. Cindy interjected a value statement when she observed her colleagues complaining about her agency's practice regarding minority contractors. "Guys, look," she said, "this is what we're doing and why... "

Similarly, Herb intervened in the community's outrage over the judge's racist remarks. He met with the judge for the purpose of challenging the judge and requesting his resignation. Marsha, while in the midst of a managers' focus group with the CEO, intervened by identifying a problem that no one had considered until that point. The result was a substantial conversation that garnered concerted action by the group. Similarly, Ray was participating in a meeting where consultants were recommending deep employee layoffs across the board. He intervened by voicing his objections in the form of strong value statements to the point that "it really turned the whole discussion

around." Jacob's story involving the Juvenile Crime Task Force illustrates how an intervening moral speech action can refocus the group conversation. He intervenes by calling the participants to a different perspective and by raising the moral reflectivity of others so they could see dimensions not previously considered. In doing so, he demonstrated how transformational leaders can shift the conversation to serve a higher moral end.

A third type of positive moral speech action is demonstrated when leaders give a response to the statement of another. If the prompting statement was "factual" only, the leader responds with a values statement or question that raises the discourse to the level of moral reflectivity. If the conversation has already been at the level of moral discourse, the leader's response sustains the moral reflectivity and carries it forward. In some cases the leader's response actions are overt, as in the case when Herb was invited by the KKK group to attend one of their rallies and explain his actions regarding the controversy involving the judge. Likewise, David's speech actions with a white female student, who felt "blamed" for past injustices against blacks, illustrated a leader's capacity to respond to another's moral language and move the conversation to deeper moral insight. The student initiated the conversation, almost immediately evoking values. Though David appeared to not respond immediately, he listened intently and responded the following day by making value statements of his own. And Eric uses the power of his "pulpit" as a consumer advocate to respond directly to the invitation of the Automobiles Dealers Association. In another story, Eric responds to the verbalized concerns of his News Director who raised a particular matter. He shifts the conversation into a values talk by asking his colleague, "by the way, how does that make you feel?"

I identified three negative speech actions that illustrate how leaders fail to engage the moral conversation despite having the opportunity to do so. Those actions are withdrawal, withholding and abdication. The first of these actions involves a

conscious decision to <u>withdraw</u> from the conversation and terminate one's prior participation in the discourse. David's interaction with the school superintendent during the a meeting with the black principals was a case in point. After he intervened and expressed his objections to the superintendent's comments, the latter reacted by closing down the discourse. It is evident that the superintendent backed off in the face of the mounting resistance he encountered as other principals began to resonate with David's misgivings. A more skilled leader may have responded differently, as did the facilitator who ran the meeting in Donna's story.

In other situations, leaders chose to withdraw in the face of mounting impediments to the discourse. Joe struggled to maintain a viable moral discourse with the members of his congregation regarding the matter of their lackluster involvement in the outreach program to the homeless. He withdrew gracefully, recognizing he couldn't force their involvement. Similarly, Peggy withdraws from the discourse where she was advocating the addition of an inclusive prayer in her agency's plan for the annual Earth Day festivities. She could not overcome the social impediment of prejudice manifested in religious intolerance. Carol pulls back from her efforts to prevent her daughter's social promotion through a conscious decision that defers to the "expert power" of school administrators. And Tim chose to withdraw his discourse regarding the need for maintaining the bilingual program in his daughter's school. He chose to do so, "in fairness" to the principal, concerned that his continued advocacy would be hurtful to the principal. Withdrawal was almost always associated with situations where leaders came to conclude that continued engagement was not worth the cost and risks involved. In Lisa's words, "You asked what were the costs of all this? ...It's withdrawal from the battle. I think some of us just give up."

Leaders can also demonstrate non-engagement by consciously avoiding the conversation in the first place and never entering into it. Though one recognizes the

opportunity for the discourse and is conscious of personal beliefs and values that relate

to the subject of discourse, one simply steps back and <u>withholds</u>. George chose not to

speak out for fear of losing his job. Brian chose to ignore his house guest's bigoted

insinuation about Jews during the board game. The conversation that could effect

change in other's thinking did not occur. And Chuck held back from expressing his

thoughts and beliefs at a principals' meeting regarding the problem of challenged

schools because he had spoken out on numerous times in the past, to no apparent avail.

But he seems to have regrets. "Well, I bit my lip," he said,

> But it was tough, it was hard. I always have acid indigestion when I swallow my
> tongue and stuff ... and it doesn't fit well with me, with my soul knowing that.
> There have been times it comes by you, you need to say something about it. And
> I passed up an opportunity to say anything about it.

Debbie told a moving account of her experience of withholding moral

conversation at the time the O.J. Simpson verdict came across the airwaves. She

described her experience in the context of being the only African American member of a

traditionally all-white southern professional civic association of professional women. As

the verdict was about to be reported, she was in the midst of a brown bag luncheon

meeting of the association. Her conscious decision to withhold her sentiments was

particularly intense, almost extreme, and is driven by a host of individual and social

impediments that prevented a meaningful conversation from ever taking place in that

particular setting.

> I will never forget the day that the OJ Simpson verdict came down. ... I was in the
> meeting room of the [club] ... and you bring a brown bag lunch. And the topic
> was going on, and it was almost over, and people were trying to get to a radio or
> whatever they could, because they said that the jury's back, the verdict's here ...
> and I kept thinking, "Oh, my God ... let me get out of here!" Where do you want
> to be when this man's fate is decided? Do you want to be the only minority in a
> room full of women who were in fact appalled that this was an interracial
> relationship from the beginning ... and definitely believed that he killed her?" And
> my thoughts were, if they find him guilty, which I really thought they were going
> to, how was I going to react in this room? I had to get out of here. ...And I could
> feel it in my chest. I had to get out of there. ... It was like I couldn't breathe if I
> was gonna be in there, and he was going to be guilty. Because, I was gonna feel

like it was me, you know. ...And I remember leaving as fast as I could, grabbing my purse and getting in the car, and sitting in the car. And by the time I got in the car, I turned the radio on and I could hear that thing that we've heard a million times again ... "we, the jury, find OJ Simpson not guilty." And I could hear the people in the inside saying, "not guilty? You're kidding! Not guilty?" ... and I remember getting into the car, rushing back to work and saying to myself, "he's not guilty!" ... and calling my husband on the phone, saying "he's not guilty!." I had to get out of there [the association meeting] ... I had to get out of there! <with deep emotion>

But the data also illustrated a significant counterpoint regarding circumstances where leaders may decide in good faith to withhold from speaking. Some told stories where the decision to withhold was done for strategic ends that can be instructive of others. The leader sits back and simply allows others to reflect together. As the conversation unfolds, it teaches and transform the participants. Larry put it this way.

In some cases, after you've made your point and after it has been supported, then there is the opportunity to not say anything the next time it occurs. ... [A colleague] and I talked about this phenomenon, and he said, "you know, sometimes in order to have resolution, you have to have some conflict." And often times you know it's coming. You hear it coming. But you just have to keep your mouth shut and let that conflict occur, let that "not-nice" experience ensue ... so that folks can learn on their own; so that you don't have to be the moral safe guarder of all situations; so that people can experience for themselves, and internalize the opportunity to pass on .... but presumably, you taught them.

In a similar vein, Steve reflected on his experience as a college professor where he would at times withhold expressing his own values, believing "the students are concluding on their own, without my telling them." Assuming the context of an open learning environment, he suggested that the moral insight becomes self evident to his students.

But leaders can choose to withhold for other well intentioned reasons. In the face of criticism and non-support from her male colleagues, Marsha consciously chose not to speak out. Instead, she attempted to communicate her beliefs in her actions. She responded to the criticism by "treating others fairly," she says, "making my point implicitly." The results, she says, "garner the respect of others." Sarah resonates the same idea.

> I think that discourse is important ... but I don't think it's as important as the leader's modeling of the behavior ... if the leader personifies or exemplifies the moral fiber or the moral characteristics ...it's amazing how it influences everything. ...they shape the culture of that organization ... the culture is the characteristics of the personality of that leader.

But in both these scenarios, moral discourse does not actually happen because the leader chooses to withhold one's values in actual forms of conversation. Yet, during the focus group, Marsha repeatedly referenced her concerns about the need to accept and affirm women's leadership roles in management within the workplace. That seemed to be a central core value for her. But in all her stories, she never spoke of an actual conversation in the workplace where she verbalized those sentiments. Instead, she seemed to be saying that she communicated her beliefs in her actions. Likewise, Sarah seems to be saying that it's more important to "walk the talk." Marsha does that by demonstrating "moral fiber," as she put it, taking a seemingly higher road that is more illustrative of moral character than it is of moral discourse. But if the walk is not reflected upon in discourse with others, the transformational learning might be hollow. I am suggesting that there is a need to also "talk the walk." In the absence of dialogue, there is no way to assess how the moral motivations of leader and follower are raised, that being the indicator of transformational leadership. The point here is not to disparage the significance of Marsha's noble actions in response to those males who doubted her skills as a manager. Surely, the correlation between leadership and character is an oft-cited theme in the literature. Nonetheless, moral character cannot impact others in the same way that moral discourse might. There is no conversation, no transforming dialogue that provides mutual feedback to both, leader and follower.

A final negative speech action, though not directly evident in the data of this study, is nonetheless implicit. Leaders can also abdicate from the moral conversation. They do so when by all appearances they are simply unaware and seemingly oblivious of the situations that present themselves as opportunities to engage others in moral

conversation. Because they would be, by definition, unaware of times they might have abdicated, the participants in this study did not demonstrate that behavior in their stories. Further research employing ethnographic observation methodologies might deepen understanding of this particular phenomenon. Nonetheless, there was at least one account where a participant described a colleague's apparent abdication.

<u>Styles of Engagement</u>

My analysis of speech actions leads to a further delineation which I describe in terms of speech style. When leaders were positively engaged in moral conversation by the speech actions of initiation, intervention or response, they tended to demonstrate a dialogic style that fell somewhere within a continuum between two contrasting approaches. I begin this section with a description of those approaches, which I describe as "direct" and "indirect" styles of moral conversation. I follow that with a discussion of various functions served by those two styles.

When leaders practice moral discourse in a <u>direct style</u>, they operate out of a strong sense of self mastery (Covey, 1989; Senge, 1990). They know what they believe and articulate those values clearly and confidently whenever the opportunity presents itself. In the direct approach, leaders looks for opportunities to speak the truth as they see it, as often as they can, by teaching others and challenging them in appropriate ways to appeal to a higher moral standard in specific deliberations. Leaders speaks out of what they see as truth or guiding principles. They do it consistently and purposefully. Those principles have meaning within the context of their personal life mission and provide clarity for their organizational vision. The direct style tends to favor making statements over asking questions. It can have a positive or a negative impact on advancing the moral conversation. Its effect is positive if it inspires and engages others in shared moral deliberation, moving the conversation forward to deepening commitment around emerging common ground. It is negative if it comes across as authoritarian,

coercive, judgmental, arrogant or self-righteous. If it does that, it diminishes the potency of the conversation. Martin Luther King would be an example of the more positive direct style, while a demagogue or zealot would be the negative.

Steve is particularly reflective of a direct style. In the focus group, he speaks passionately about the need for leaders to constantly "put the message out there" in a direct "take charge" and assertive matter. He speaks persuasively and with great inflection in his voice, demonstrating the intensity that he feels about the substance of what he is saying.

> Moral leaders take every opportunity they can, when they can, to speak when they can …So every time you get a chance, you need to do it. … I just gave a paper at a conference last week. I was the only person of about 200 papers that gave what I would call a moral topic. It was all about doing the moral things that teachers and administrators are supposed to do. But I always take that opportunity to insert that kind of leadership whenever I can … and I think that it has to happen, and if that doesn't happen, then it seems to me that the person is not a real moral leader.

Steve illustrated that his direct style is very straightforward and self assured when he underscored one of his fundamental beliefs and guiding life principles.

> The fundamental reality of the world is the oneness of humanity. We are one human family. Anything else is illusion. Now, I say that with conviction, and I say that with certainty, because I'm right, and I know I'm right. Now, we have all kinds, we have all kinds <he repeats himself, speaking very emphatically> of agencies and institutions and laws and so on, that separate people, that divide people, that do all kinds of things … and they are all on the wrong track and they will always be on the wrong track until fundamentally they become aware that we are all one human family.

Leaders like Steve who practice a direct approach tend to be particularly goal oriented and persistent in their pursuit of the good that they strive to accomplish. Cindy exhibited a direct approach in her role as a community organizer. She was single-minded in her committed efforts to improve her old neighborhood, never missing an opportunity to advocate on its behalf. "You really have to kind of step out and say we have to do things differently." Her perseverance and tenacity drove her resolve to never miss an opportunity to ask the mayor in public town meetings why the neighborhood was

in the condition that it was. Another participant described a similar dynamic as "standing tall," where one is seen consistently as upholding a particular value, calling others to some form of accountability.

At the heart of this direct approach is the notion of principled leadership (Covey, 1991; London, 1999) that enabled Herb "to stand up" to the judge. He says emphatically that "it was wrong what he [the judge] did and should not have been done." When his colleagues at the Chamber of Commerce asked him "why in the world would you want to put yourself in that position?" he responded matter-of-factly, "because it's the right thing to do." He reflects a similar direct approach in his day-to-day management style at his firm, where his employees "look to me to say the right things when I need to say it, to represent all of our values." But there is a careful nuance in the balance between "principled leadership" and authoritarian leadership in those transformational leaders who employ a direct approach. Steve speaks of being forthright, yet giving others "full latitude." If they ask for his advise, he gives it. "I don't shade it," he says, "but on the other hand, I don't compel them to follow my advise either," unless the discourse rises to a "level of principle." And at that point, he concludes, "everybody knows my views."

As one moves across the continuum in the opposite direction, leaders' styles of moral discourse becomes less direct. At the extreme opposite end is a form of task leadership that I describe as functional-facilitative. But my notion of indirect leadership style requires more than simply fulfilling the task role of leading the conversation. Transformational leaders, whether they employ a direct style or an indirect style, must be able to communicate their values. They are not value-neutral and non-directive, as suggested by one participant who critiqued the chairperson of a combative meeting in which she had participated. "It bothered me so much," she said, "when I saw this chairperson just completely lose her cool. What I thought she needed to indulge, was to keep herself out of it, to have framed it and then have facilitated it."

The dilemma comes into focus when I asked that same person how the leader of that meeting might have framed the discourse if the latter had strong convictions on the matter. She responded, "then, they have to turn the chair over to somebody else. But they can't do it as the person who is the chair. Their role has to be, I feel real strongly, their role has to be facilitative." The inference is that the leadership task role must be filled by someone who is value-neutral. But that presents an anomaly. In so doing, the leader must withdraw from the dialogue and ipso facto forfeit any transformational leadership role. This illustrates the tension that exists in transformational models of moral leadership. I am looking for a way out of this dilemma. Can one exercise one's leadership role function while articulating one's values, doing it in a way that allows one to remain engaged with others, while fully participating in the great work of shared moral reflectivity, yet remaining open to where the process might lead?

I am suggesting a careful nuance here. Transformational leaders should be facilitative to the degree that their speech actions empower others to participate in the conversation in ways that demonstrate "an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real change that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1993). Transformational leadership is, by definition, fundamentally dialogical and participative. In the process, the leader communicates his or her values, either directly or indirectly. Transformational leadership corrupts by an exaggerated direct style that is authoritarian and functions by moral edict, akin to a "pseudo transformational leadership" that Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) describe as controlling and manipulative of others. So too, the indirect style cannot be reduced to a functionary role of mere task-master where the leader is simply the neutral facilitator of the conversation. Some have argued, as does Bass, that this kind of value-neutral facilitative moral leadership is actually non-

leadership because it dilutes and minimizes the leader's capacity to effect change.[5] But

Bass goes so far as to equate this aberration with "participative" leadership in general,

implying that the latter cannot demonstrate transformational leadership. I prefer to call

the distortion "functional facilitation," as Bass uses the term "participative" pejoratively

and in a way that seems to contradict the substance of transformational leadership. The

point is that the moral discourse is dialogical and participative, involving leader and

follower in deliberative values talk that impacts both leader and follower as they grow

toward holding shared values on which they can collaboratively make value choices that

make change possible. Figure 8 illustrates transformational leadership as operating

between the two extremes.

Figure 8.   Styles of Moral Discourse

Transformational Moral Discourse
Leader communicates values
in mutual dialogue

Facilitative ------------ INDIRECT ----------------------- DIRECT ----------- Authoritarian

Extreme Indirect   *Extreme Direct*
Leader is value-neutral   Leader imposes
(functional-facilitation   values on others
i.e., non-leadership)
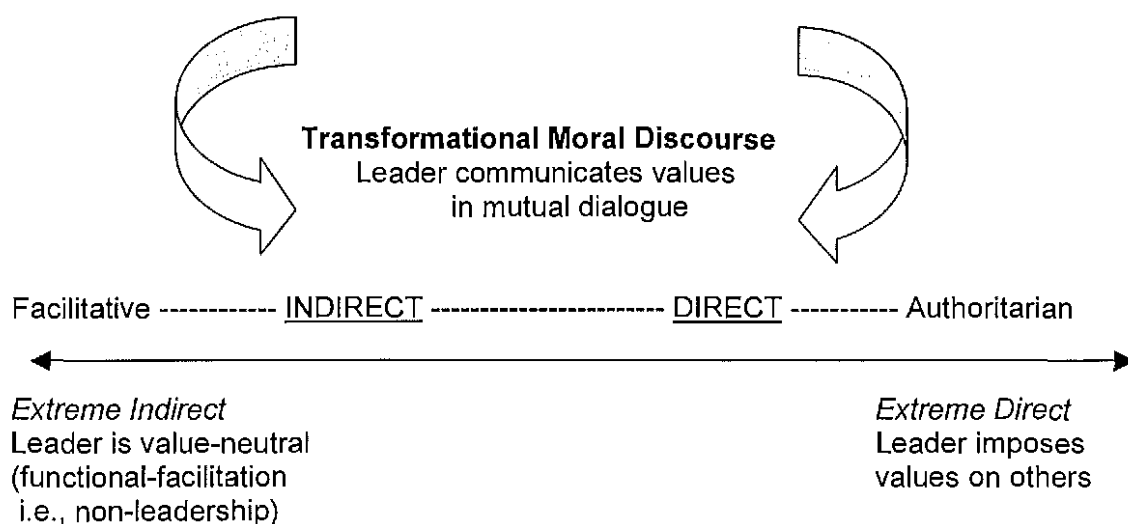
This notion of an indirect style is not non-directive. When a leader employs it,

there is a clear indication of a value orientation subscribed to by the leader, and to which

the leader is persuading others. It's just that the leader's style is less overt and more

subtle, and so, more "in-direct." It is by no means an "hands-off" approach. And yet, it is

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[5] See also Burns' critique of Rost, as cited by Ciulla (1998b, p.15).

surely facilitative, as must all transformation leadership be if it is to engage the participation of others. Nonetheless, one enters the conversation with some explicit or implicit value position or leaning that is communicated to others, or one at least works toward some value position if it is not evident to oneself at the outset of the conversation. The point is that the indirect facilitative leader is not value-neutral.

The leader who practices an indirect style of moral discourse may have strong feelings on a particular matter or may be uncertain as to where he or she "stands," perhaps struggling to make sense of a given situation. But the leader pulls back from making what may be construed as direct truth statements grounded in solid moral principles, as in the case of the direct style. Rather, the leader looks for opportunities to promote shared critical thinking, without a pre-conceived end in mind. She or he may make a statement or ask a question, but the effect is a sort of "coming in the back door" that stimulates the conversation by creating a process of creative thinking. There is an implicit trust that the process will yield an appropriate decision within the group that illuminates the "right thing to do."

Specific kinds of indirect moral speech actions seem to be framed by the leader-speaker's desire to be facilitative with an aim to raise awareness and consciousness rather than solve immediate problems or posture definitive solutions. Similar to the Socratic method, the indirect style tends to favor asking questions over making statements. But the indirect approach should not imply that moral communications lack energy and are mere "whispers," where moral utterances are "timid, understated, unassertive and unassuming" (Bird, 1996, p. 208). Rather, they must be recognizable as moral statements and in some way stimulate others in reflectivity and dialogue. There is a sense that the dialogue will be educative and morally evaluative and that the right thing to do will become self evident to the participants. Specific kinds of indirect moral speech actions seem to be framed by the leader-speaker's desire to be facilitative with an aim to

raise awareness and consciousness rather than solve immediate problems. It sees moral conversation as a developmental process.

A particularly vibrant example of a persuasive indirect approach to moral discourse was evident in Patricia's story when she described her comments made at the School Board meeting where a principal was terminated for sexual harassment of three teachers in his charge. Her discourse "rang true" as it resonated deeply among those who heard it. Her style, though forceful and powerful, did not directly confront or challenge her colleague whom she felt made inappropriate remarks in support of the guilty principal. Instead, she directed her remarks to the three teachers themselves, "looking into their faces" and did it in a way that impacted the entire crowd in the room (see Appendix M, story #43). Similarly, Chuck's response to the faculty member who voiced a dissenting opinion on the matter of grade inflation demonstrated an indirect style. He honored the freedom of the other to dissent, but in doing so, served a larger aim that engaged the dissenting teacher's "buy in" on the emerging common ground of shared values that undergirded the school's mission. The indirect approach does not so much advance a particular solution to a problem or conflict as much as it stimulates others to imagine alternatives and to see a "bigger picture" of reality.

Lisa' s thoughts capture the affinity that exists between the leader's role as facilitator and the dynamics of the indirect style. The job of leaders, she say, "is to draw out from everybody else what they are thinking." The indirect style highlights a basic aim of collective moral discourse that seeks to build common understanding through a communicative style that unpacks shared meaning. The discourse seeks to interpret meaning (Tracy, 1987) as it unfolds in the group process. Lisa explicates the collaborative aim of the leader's facilitative efforts.

> The most important part for me is to find out what other people are thinking and to bring that to the fore, not only for them, but for me. I think leaders ought …to be facilitators of the conversation … of the issue … and to be able to take a

group, throw out the right questions, allow everyone to get their point of view in. If they get bogged down, to throw out another question, and to guide the conversation. So I think that one of the attributes of a leader is to be able to facilitate the conversation.

Joe underscored how the indirect style can be relevant to moral decisionmaking in group settings. He spoke of persuading and influencing the group, but not dominating the group's thinking.

It's extremely facilitative, collaborative, organic because very often ... if you go in with the answer, and you are too sure of it, you can be sure that it will not happen -- absolutely sure. You get the ideas out. You let people think about it. You let it go to committee, to task force, or whatever it needs to do. You perhaps keep a fire under the process, or the committee, or the individuals. You perhaps find out wise advocates for your position, but you try to be sure that most of the positions are not your positions -- they're the group's position.

As stated earlier, the contrast between direct and indirect styles of moral discourse needs to be seen in the context of a continuum. Knowing when to use one or the other style will call for strategic skills, discussed in the final section of this chapter. But most of the participants, like David, see themselves as leaning one way or the other on the continuum. They draw from both styles, depending on the situational contexts.

I think I use both, [but] I think I use direct more than I do facilitative [indirect]. ...I think if there are issues on which I am truly neutral, then I will use the facilitative, not only for the good of the group or for myself, because then it might give me impetus on one side or the other. ... I think most of the time, I use the direct ... and I do this carefully, and the reason I say "carefully", is because at the beginning of the discussion, I don't want to shut off discussion by saying, "OK, I believe that," ... because that can [cause others to] have a tendency to say, "Well, if you believe this, then what's the sense of us talking about it?" And there are some issues where I think I do need to say, "here's where I am ... I take my stand, I can take none other." I think that other issues, when we're as a team, and we're grasping at answers and responses that use the facilitative approach more, when we're wrestling with coming up with an answer ... and it definitely has a group consequence. So I am more likely to use the facilitative role then.

The direct style is marked by passion, while the indirect approach has more to do with persuading and inspiring others. Chuck compared the interplay between the two styles to his past training as a guidance counselor.

> I am a guidance counselor also, by training ... and we have a notion that when you try to blend the two together, we call it eclectic, and I suspect that I slide in and out possibly. There are some things that I am passionate about ... and then there are other times that I've tried to persuade or inspire or solicit input into a decision that I am wrestling with.

Each approach has its strengths but also a potential weakness if carried to either extreme. If the leader is direct and forthright, that candor and transparency can stimulate moral discourse. But it also has a downside that may be intimidating or manipulating. It may need to be blunted or "smoothed over" by complimentary speech actions that are more indirect. Softening the edges of directness can allow oneself to be perceived as more vulnerable and consequently, more approachable, thus stimulating the conversation. For instance, Patricia, speaks of her need to "soften the edges." The inverse applies as well. Those who are more attuned to an indirect style may need to sharpen their approach and be more forceful in driving a particular moral value that bears upon a given situation. Elli is one who tends to shy away from the direct style and may need to "sharpen the edge," as evidenced in the following statement.

> It probably depends on the situation. I do think, you know, sometimes the direct approach eliminates conversation. And it all depends on how you present it ... and it also depends on whether you are with subordinates. .... I guess I probably lean more toward helping people to express their opinion, before I express mine [indirect]. Maybe, selfishly, because I am interested in theirs, and also, I don't want them to be influenced by what I think.

A final comment on the distinction between the direct and indirect style seems to bear upon the leader's power base within the group. Those participants who seemed more oriented toward a direct approach tended to hold greater positional power within their organizations. Yet, those who employed a more indirect approach seemed better able to engage the participation of others in moral conversation. This may indicate that more vibrant forms of moral discourse are less likely to occur in organizations where power is invested in hierarchical structures where leadership operates primarily from positional power. Flatter organizations that functionally employ more shared models of

leadership are more likely to give credence to leader's personal power, as opposed to their positional power. Similarly, those in middle management, who hold less positional power, may be more adept to an indirect style of moral discourse. These power dynamics will be further unpacked in Chapter Five.

<div align="center">The Functions of Moral Discourse</div>

I conclude this section with a discussion of several functions served by the use of moral talk. Those functions demonstrate the particular uses of moral discourse in light of the aims of the leader-speaker as she or he employs either a direct or indirect style. My notion of function is akin to the typology of functional uses of moral talk in Bird et al. (1989). When leaders talk ethics, they are involved in a range of activities that serve various purposes. Bird makes the point that some of those functions actually have very little to do with ethics and can be self-serving. He says that such uses can be dysfunctional. But Bird's notion of "moral talk" is more monological than it is dialogical. Those uses that are dysfunctional are so precisely because they do not lend themselves to the positive construction of moral discourse as a socially interactive process that is fundamentally dialogical. More functional uses have to do with genuinely dialogical efforts to solve problems and positively contribute toward organizational change. Further, Bird's research draws no reference to leadership style and is applicable to the practice of management in general. Given the context of my own research, I have identified specific functional uses of moral talk as practiced by transformational leaders. In so doing, I disregard dysfunctional uses of moral talk, many of which I have previously identified as impediments to the conversation.

Certain functions seem to mark the direct style, while other functions are more reflective of the indirect style. These functions of moral discourse are not mutually exclusive and often overlap as leaders move back and forth among functions and across the direct/indirect continuum. Functions of the direct approach include: (1) teaching; (2)

problem solving; (3) correcting others; (4) challenging another's point of view; or (5) advocating a position, cause, or solution to a problem. More indirect functions include value-laden speech actions that serve the following purposes: (6) sharing information; (7) making observations or speculating; (8) inspiring others; (9) reconciling seemingly conflictual realities; (10) questioning business as usual; (11) disclosing without imposing one's own beliefs; or, (12) simply acknowledging and validating another's values. Many of these functions relate to corollary stimulants to the discourse, as previously discussed.

A few examples from the data can serve to illustrate several of these functions. The most direct functional use of moral talk is to impart moral knowledge to others in the form of a moral value that is postured as a given. This teaching function (Senge, 1990) is evident in a moral speech action that is meant to educate others and impart an explicit moral truth. Steve's statement that "a fundamental reality of the world is the oneness of humanity" is a moral value that he communicates with consistency and regularity. Similarly, Eric tells the members of the Automobile Dealers Association that "everyone wants to be treated fairly." Such direct statements are spoken with deep conviction and are held up by the speaker as universal and normative moral pronouncements.

Direct value statements also serve to identify problems and posture solutions to them. Cindy pleads before the mayor, "the community center is in awful condition." Herb speaks of a need to address the personal problems of his employees. "I think the leader solves problem," he says, adding, with a smile, "my wife, she says to me, 'You're dad to everybody down there!' "

Other direct speech actions take various forms correcting another, where the leader's aim is to correct another's prior speech action or behavior. The risk of judging the other can be counterproductive to the dialogue if the leader comes across as admonishing the other's person. The skillful transformational leader can walk the

tightrope and judge the action or statement without judging the person. There is an obvious tension here with positive dynamics that call for suspending judgment. Correcting others needs to be buffered with the context of trusting relationships, empathic listening, or compensating speech actions that affirm and respect the person. If they are not, those value statements can be counterproductive and devolve into dysfunctional actions that impede the conversation. If done well, they can positively stimulate the discourse. Cindy hears the complaints of her colleagues who are critical of the organization's affirmative action policy regarding minority contractors. Her corrective takes the form of subtle counsel, calling her colleagues to a higher ethical standard, as she says to them, "look, we're not giving them a handout ... we are giving them an opportunity." Joe tells the story of a time he was in a meeting and was "shamed" by another person for divulging confidential information. Yet, because of the trusting context of the dialogue, he felt the experience was productive, providing him a learning experience that built the bonds of relationship between him and the other person.

Less confrontative functions of direct speech action can simply serve to challenge or stretch another's thinking without making a formal corrective. Herb challenged the complacency of his colleagues at the Chamber of Commerce who initially felt that had no role to play in the public controversy surrounding the judge who had make the racist comments. Ray simply spoke out in disagreement with the recommendation of the consultants who had recommended employee layoffs. And Elli described a time she challenged the members of her board to see a reality they were not considering.

> I mean, they thought, well, you know, "we're doing fine" ... until it was kind of
> called to their attention, "well, no, you really aren't making an impact at all!" ...
> They basically communicated with the superintendent, and that was all. And so,
> in this process, we talked about the need for relationships beyond the
> superintendent. ... and maybe what I tried to do with them is say, "you all are so
> vital to this effort, but you need to form relationships with the school board

members. You need to form relationships with the community. You need to reach out beyond the superintendent.

It is evident throughout the stories told by participants that many functions of direct moral discourse express disagreement with others, taking the form of responses or intervening speech actions meant to correct or challenge another's thinking. The prevalence of these forms of direct speech actions is indicative of the frequency which participants seem to describe their experience of moral discourse in the context of conflictual situational events. There is a specific problem or issue at hand that warrants resolution. The leader speaks in disagreement with another, and often the other is a person in some position of authority or expertise.

Advocacy is a function that articulates a particular position with an end in mind. The speech action is context specific and applies to a real situation or case in point. Cindy clearly advocates a specific solution to the problem of her run down neighborhood. She came with solutions to put on the table of discourse, and advocated persuasively. Her action is a good example demonstrating how classic forms of community political organizing function as forms of direct moral advocacy. Advocacy can be more subtle, though, and less direct when it takes the form of a question. Brian's question at a staff meeting charged with planning a holiday party is a good example of this less direct from of advocacy. He clearly subscribes to a certain position, i.e., that the celebration needs to honor religious diversity. But he frames his discourse around a question that invites others to reflect collaboratively, toward a productive end. Advocacy can thus be couched in the form of open-ended questions or rhetorical questions that give free space to participants to talk about an issue in ways that might otherwise immediately force participants to either agree or disagree. It simply gets them thinking on another level.

Brian's less direct form of advocacy increasingly moves toward other speech action functions that are on the indirect side of the style continuum. As in the case of direct moral speech actions, indirect functions seem to frame the leader-speaker's aims and purposes in speaking out. The speaker may simply offer an <u>observation</u> or make a speculative comment that prompts the moral discourse or shifts the focus. Such actions are often the means that leaders use to initiate a moral conversation in the first place or provide a reference point that others may come back to as moral insight develops in the course of the conversation. Larry "plants white papers" in order to "play at conversations." Or, he makes presentations at meetings on one or another subject, simply to nurture the waters of creative thinking among his board members. Elli helps her board members come to greater clarity about their role and how they are seen by others. The leader's aim is to offer insight pregnant with moral meaning so that others may come to clarify their own values and the values of the organization. Often, the process simply involves <u>sharing information</u>, like Larry's white papers. Often, the leader who makes such speech action sees some dimension of the issue in ways that others have not looked at. Less direct value statements like these can help others move toward greater focus and begin a gradual shift in thinking. Less direct than teaching or advocating, this function is one of forging a direction, blazing a path through the woods, as a guide, to help others find their way. From the outset, the leader may see the reality more clearly, though he or she can come to see it in greater focus as the discourse progresses.

Eric illustrated this indirect function of simply sharing information. While watching a news report about riots in Cincinnati, he makes the comment, "Well, I am not one hundred percent familiar with that situation, but I can tell you that there has always been a distrust between law enforcement and inner city communities." His manner is low key as he makes an observation from the realm of his experience. The approach is a form of

teaching, but the style is less direct. He is simply making an observation. Others perceive him as "telling it like it is." He speaks honestly and forthrightly from the legitimacy of his own experience.

Other indirect functions including motivating and <u>inspiring</u> others in ways that give hope and raise the ante of moral expectation. The leader may also initiate efforts that attempt to <u>reconcile</u> seemingly conflictual perspectives in the conversation, creating openings that can point to creative alternatives not previously considered. The leader strives for resolution, looking for ways to "take it a step further," saying, as Cindy did, that "there's got to be something else that we can do. And a lot of times, there are." The conversation can then move toward a solution not previously imagined as previously unseen common ground begins to emerge. Such was the effect of Patricia's engagement with fellow school board members when she suggested the prospect of an abstinence pledge as a way out of the impasse in the board efforts to develop a policy establishing a sex education curriculum.

Simply <u>questioning</u> is yet another function that an indirect style can use to stimulate substantive values conversation. Such questions can question "business as usual" as did Peggy's engagement with her fellow grant evaluator. Other questions can be postured in response to another's comment. Larry seems to use this tactic regularly in his consistent indirect style. He described the time he stimulated a conversation about the death penalty. Colleagues made a passing reference to a recent execution, to which he responded by throwing back a question which served to move the dialogue along.

> I'll ask a question back... what I am really asking them is to think about what they just said. Now, I am not going to tell them. I mean, I don't say anything, I just ask a question. And then, sometimes, I'll ask another question. [For instance,] they start, you know, like with a statement and they said, "well, what do you think? should he be killed?" And my question back was, "well, should he?" ...And then, what happens, is they come back with, "well, what are you talking about?

Eric does the same. He listens to the promptings of his editor who was seemingly perplexed by the action of members of the staff who bypassed the editor and took a controversial matter to a higher level within the organization's structure. Eric responds with a question, "Yeah, I heard that they were going to [do that] ... by the way, how do you feel?"

Sometimes the question may already be in others' minds, but for one impediment or another, no one verbalizes the issue until the leader poses the question and "gets the ball rolling" as Donna said. She went on to describe a large meeting where participants were filled with anxiety and mistrust, fearing that they were being manipulated by those who had planned the meeting.

> Finally, somebody got up and said, "OK, lets call it just like it is. Nobody trusts anybody right now. What's really going on here?' ... I mean, 120 people were in complete silence, for a good long time ... and, you know, after this person stood up and said it, everybody was very willing to [say], "Yeah, yeah, what's really is going on?" ...You know, it was something that obviously everyone wanted to ask. Everybody clearly wanted to ask him, but nobody wanted to say it. When she finally did, it was sort of a sigh of relief. Naturally, as soon as she said it, we all took credit for it. <laughter>

The leader's question merely acknowledged the "elephant in the room." By asking the question, the speaker gave legitimacy to the feelings that others had and prompted a substantive moral conversation that changed the course of the meeting as the dam broke and the floodgates opened.

One of the more powerful uses of indirect moral discourse is self disclosure, where leaders speak about their own beliefs and in the context of their personal life experience. Speech acts of self disclosure are marked by a clear ownership of the belief or experience by the speaker. Unlike acts of teaching, they claim no universal truth, but simply posture a perspective in the context of one's own particular beliefs. Yet they can have significant influence on others and have the effect of prompting others to reflect upon and share their own values.

Elli describes how she shared her own values about public education with members of her board, in efforts to motivate them to think beyond simply economic factors. Peggy's experience with her staff in the lunch room is a particularly good example. Her style is indirect as she facilitates an environment of trust and openness evidenced by the her own self disclosure prompted by a news story about sexual harassment in the workplace. Others in the group responded by sharing related stories that had the effect of mutually validating one another's experiences, empowering the participants to share more and sustain that level of discourse through successive lunchtime reflections.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable self disclosures occurred in a focus group where one woman made a pointed and honest statement to another person while the group was engaged in a conversation about race relations prompted by a prior story told by the latter. The woman, a Caucasian, looked passionately to the other person, an African American woman, and said, "I have had, you know, people, African Americans, in my home. I've been in social situations with African American friends, but I have never been invited to an African American home. I have always been curious about that." A particularly intense and meaningful conversation ensued.

Finally, indirect speech acts can function in the form of simply acknowledging and validating another's speech action. The speaker acknowledges the statements of others as legitimate, not necessarily agreeing or disagreeing. Judgment is suspended, a stimulant that was previously noted. Herb acknowledged the woman who initially objected to his efforts to solve the problems of her blighted neighborhood. His speech action provided a path for him to engage the woman in more direct functions that subsequently involved collaborative problem solving. Fran's experience in the race relations study circle was based in a group process grounded in mutual respect and acknowledgement of the diverse experiences of the participants. They shared stories

that disclosed their varied life experience and at the same time heard their life experience acknowledged and validated by others. This dynamic was demonstrated in Jacob's capacity to give value to the racist perspective of a member of his study circle who could see no prejudice within himself. And it was evidenced in Chuck's willingness to acknowledge the perspective of a dissenting faculty member, underscoring the openness which Chuck strives to maintain in order to sustain meaningful values talk with his colleagues.

To summarize this section, the practice of moral discourse demonstrates specific speech actions that leaders positively employ to engage the conversation. Those are initiation, intervention and response. Conversely, withdrawing, withholding, and abdicating are negative speech actions of disengagement. Transformational leaders can be seen as practicing a speech style on a continuum that moves between indirect and direct styles, though most seem to have a proclivity to one or the other. Extreme forms of direct or indirect style seem to reduce the capacity of leaders to function as transformational agents of change. Finally, specific speech actions serve a variety of functional uses for moral talk. Some of those uses seem to be reflective of a more direct style while other functions demonstrate a more indirect style.

Specific Leader Practices

Beyond speech action, style and function, the data point to other more specific practices that leaders use to strengthen their capacity to engage others in moral conversation. In my presentation, I distinguish between internal and external practices. Internal practices speak to the means that leaders use to advance their own moral development and personal growth. The inference is that such practices improve their own capacity to talk values with others. External practices are more overt behaviors that describe what leaders do to model and stimulate moral conversation with others.

Internal Practices

Transformational leaders are so because they themselves are continually being transformed as they grow toward becoming more self actualized human beings. The immediate effect of moral discourse is not on changing others, but on changing oneself. "I am not looking for people that I can tell how I believe," said Elli. "I'm looking for people who help me refine and define my own beliefs and values." David described the process of transformation as becoming an "authentic" person, suggesting that fertile moral discourse is born of a mutual desire among participants who seek an authentic expression of their own humanity. Taylor (1992) argues that such authenticity is a matter of being "in touch with one's inner moral sense." From the perspective of Rousseau (1762/1950), it is the source of the human dignity and can only come about after the decline of hierarchical and authoritarian systems. As such, it is the fountain of modern democratic society.

In a similar vein, Joe believes that new forms of leadership are emerging that will operate in a human pool of increasingly self-actualized free persons. This development will have significant impact on our notion of leadership. Leadership cannot impose values upon others. Self actualized persons choose their own values, and moral discourse is vital to that process.

> In the leadership that I see in the future, there are going to be no authoritarian leaders. I mean there gonna be, there will always be people that will try to be authoritarian leaders, but I don't think they will survive very long in the future that I long for, and see increasingly evolving in the world, which is of self-confident, self-actualized people that are not going to be pushed around. And therefore, they are going to have different ideas about everything.

Several participants saw moral discourse as a means toward self mastery and made reference to Covey's notion of "sharpening the saw" of continuous improvement (Covey, 1989). Another person equated moral discourse with Bennis' notion of the "crucible" (Bennis & Thomas, Forthcoming 8/02) where leaders learn resilience and

adaptability through the confluence of transformative events and changing life circumstances, "and out of that comes the leader." It is evident that genuine transformational leaders can only be committed to the transformation of others if they are first committed to their own human and moral development.

Though my study did not access participants in terms of their stage of cognitive moral development (Kohlberg, 1969a, 1969b, 1976), other research demonstrates a strong correlation between transformational leadership and higher stages of moral reasoning (Dukerich et al., 1990; Graham, 1995; Turner et al., In press). That research suggests that the shift to post-conventional moral development is a product of age, education and life experience as leaders move to higher stages of principled moral reasoning. Kohlberg (1969b) suggests that only 2% of the population attains to the highest level. The numbers of truly transformational leaders may be comparable, given the correlation between the two theories. But without reference to such theories, Larry seems to grasp the point intuitively. While the group was talking about how difficult it was for most leaders to practice moral discourse effectively, he had this to say:

> It's only 2% of the population that ever gets to that perspective. ... we are dealing with a very, very small segment of human society. And, so, how many organizations ever get to that level? ... not many, because organizations are by nature, accretions or groups of people. I think that moral discourse is a step on the path of individual development or organizational development, and I don't know what the end of the path looks like. But its an important step.

I can make no assumption about the moral development of the participants in my study. Nonetheless, to the extent that my pool of participants are reasonably representative of leaders who are more disposed to a transformational leadership style, I attempt to extract from the data some broad criteria that may give shape to just how transformational leaders stimulate their moral development and how that might influence their capacity to engage with others in moral conversation.

My analysis identified four internal practices that facilitate leaders' personal growth and moral development: (1) transformational leaders are self reflective; (2) they are open to change as they re-evaluate their beliefs and values; (3) they are able to move beyond dualistic thinking and practice integral thinking that allows them to see the bigger picture; and (4) they nurture a moral vision.

Participants in the study seemed to have a predisposition to engage in moral discourse becaues they are themselves <u>self-reflective</u> persons. The practice of moral discourse seems to percolate their own self reflectivity and contribute to their personal growth and development. The process seems to lead to increased authenticity, self actualization, and self mastery. They have a proclivity to practice "a sort of soul searching" as they "go deep" and get in touch with the "gut level" of their own feelings, values and beliefs. "It made me find out what makes me tick," said Herb. Jacob described it as a matter "of asking some hard questions, and dealing with some real close issues." Transformational leaders hunger to find meaning in their life and to understand their life experience. Larry described the process as one of accessing tacit knowledge that interprets that meaning.

> I think that people seem to discover what they feel, discover what they think and feel. And to acknowledge that is to acknowledge that you don't know or feel necessarily the truth in the moment, and therefore you engage in those things [moral discourse] to access that.

This penchant for self reflectivity seems to motivate their desire to encourage others to do the same. They seek to create environments where others can come in touch with their own feelings and values. Herb talked about his efforts to inject that kind of stimulant in his professional practice as an architect. He makes an effort, he says, to design buildings in a way that convey a "social responsibility" that "evokes feelings out of people."

Because they are self-reflective, transformational leaders are open to change as they re-evaluate their beliefs and values. This presents a two-edged sword to the notion of self mastery and principled leadership. There is a sense that transformational leaders are attuned to the limits of their own self mastery in ways that allow themselves to risk being changed as they come to interpret their reality differently in changing times and circumstances and as they are exposed to the experience and values of others. A leader surely needs to knows who he or she is, what he or she believes, and posture those principles. Yet in light of previous discussion, one's beliefs can be the very impediment to moral discourse. Leaders skilled in the practice of moral discourse can walk the delicate tightrope of posturing their beliefs, while suspending judgment about another's beliefs. In doing so, they open themselves to the risk of being influenced by the other and changing their own beliefs and values. Joe spoke philosophically of this dynamic that lies at the heart of the postmodern dilemma of multiples realities.

> I think the answer, and it's a paradoxical answer of course, like most wisdom ... is that there is more than one ...I mean, we're not one faceted, we're not one dimensional. We're a bunch of different people, and part of the excitement of leadership is that you can see parts of yourself in these other people. I mean, now its so exciting for me, because I am getting old enough [to realize that].

Elli alluded to the same challenge.

> I think that it is important that we are constantly reevaluating, you know, how we feel, and what we think about things. ...I may even disagree a little bit about being so sure of your values ... I mean, I think you certainly do need to be confident in what you believe, but at the same time, there could be an experience, or, in conversation with someone else, that you might [change your value]. ... There might be an aspect that you haven't thought about, that could possibly change that value.

Participants seemed very willing to change how they believe, to revisit and re-evaluate their values. Though they spoke of having principles, they often conveyed a sense, like Elli, that their values were not set in stone. "I learn so much from other people, " Elli went on to say, "and I am constantly re-evaluating positions, and beliefs, and the way I do things. And I think the day we stop doing that is a really bad day."

Such a disposition demonstrates that transformational leaders have a capacity for coping with ambiguity which helps them cope well with change. If transformational leadership is all about change-making, one's capacity to reevaluate one's own values surely contributes to that. Such leaders seem to be able to think through the demands for value change in several ways. One means is by interpreting their values in the context of changing times, history, and circumstances. Another is a capacity to do moral reasoning within the context of a hierarchy of values such that certain values are more important than others in changing circumstances. Context is everything, as they consider moral problem solving in light of the particularity of needs and history. David described these intricacies as making the "right" decision in the existential "now." There is an implicit tone of humility in his remarks, as he recognizes that he can only speak and act within the limiting horizons of his own lifeworld (Habermas, 1990a).

> There are many times we look around at the decisions that we have made and a year later, and we say, "my goodness, it really doesn't feel as if we accomplished anything" ... we really don't feel like it did anything, because things still seem just as badly <sic> as they were before ... but when the decision is based upon authentic beliefs, authentic concepts and notions of right and wrong, I do it because it is right in the moment. ... and, yes, I would like some legacy to follow it, but I think I have read too much of human history to think that I'm building a monument. We are not building monuments. We are making decisions that we hope will last, but we haven't invested in it from a lasting point of view. We've invested in it because it is the right thing to do right now. ... And so, the relevant moment, the moral moment, is the "now" of that decision. And because we cannot have perfect knowledge, three months from now, we may find that the "now" decision was based on some very faulty information, which had dire consequences. And I can say, at that moment, "gee, I am sorry about these consequences ..." But I can't wrap myself in guilt because at the moment the decision was made, based on all the information I had, it was the right decision to make.

Joe mentioned that "the Pope, the Buddha, Gandhi, Moses or Jesus, whatever" were all transformed in the course of their lives and adopted "different views at different points." He concludes, "It's not all of one piece. They grow, they change, sometimes they get an entirely different view." Tim speaks of the process as being "fluid," never in "concrete." He goes on to suggest that universal values are themselves something that

have changed over time. At the heart of the transformational process within the moral discourse enterprise is an intellectual honesty that stands vigil against distortions of self-serving principles, moral absolutism or "anything goes" relativism.

If one's values and even one's principles can change over time, one must ask how this impacts the leader's sense of personal integrity. This question points to a third inner practice demonstrated by the leader-participants of this study. They seem to have a nuanced notion of integrity that is marked by a capacity to move beyond dualistic thinking. They practice integral thinking that allows them to see a bigger picture. Often, it is accompanied with maturity and age that gives "wisdom," as Joe said, allowing them to cope with ambiguity and to balance seemingly conflictual realities. Integrity becomes not so much a matter of character ethics, but a way of thinking and dialoguing "integrally."

Wilber (2000) defines integral thinking in terms of developmental psychology and the evolution of human consciousness. The word "integral" means "to integrate, to bring together, to join, to link, to embrace" what otherwise appears to be disjoint or fragmented disparity. It bespeaks of a "fusion of horizons" (Gadamer, 1995, cited in Warnke, 1995, p. 137) where "we learn to move in a broader horizon, within which what we have formerly taken for granted as the background to valuation can be situated as one possibility alongside the different background of the formerly unfamiliar culture." It is a capacity to synthesize, to think across polarity, to think non-dualistically, as Larry put it.

> I think that there is a level here that you get to that not many of us arrive at. It has do with non-dualism. So often, moral discourse [in the popular sense] involves a dualism. Its not that, white or black, right or wrong. I think it was F. Scott Fitzgerald who said that the mark of a first rate mind is the ability to entertain two contradictory thoughts simultaneously[6]. That's non-dualism, which ultimately is at the heart of the ability to deal with the question [of how] to value cultural diversity and the common good at the same time. And that is not rational. That's trans-rational. True transformational leaders are those folks who are able to do both, not either-or. We are dealing with a very, very small segment of human society.

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[6] The actual quote is: "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposite ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function." F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940). "The Crack-up"; Esquire (New York: February, 1936).

Again, Larry suggests that few leaders can do this, another indication that the fullness of transformational models of leadership may be so elusive. Leaders who think integrally are able to see the big picture by pointing to an integrating philosophical worldview. It's a process of eye-opening, insight, and "waking up." It was evident in Elli calling her board to see a bigger picture of things, to broaden their horizons. It suggests that moral discourse is a matter of putting more perspectives on the table of conversation. The quest for integration demonstrates a will to uncover continually expanding and universalizing principles, finding a "common ground of being," an "underlying moral ethic" as Steve put it. There is a need to see the "big picture" of the "forest through the trees." The will to do so gives one resilience through hope and vision

> We have to see humanity either as a forest or as an ocean .. and what we often see, is not what's below the surface ... and sometimes I realize that, you know, what happens, is that we get buffeted by the waves on the surface ... you know, we get inundated by the branches falling from the trees. We have to realize that the solid ground of humanity is there ... if we can keep that picture in our mind ... that the ocean is underneath that turbulence wave, that storm ... then ... that gives us ground ... that gives us direction.

Throughout their stories, participants cited examples of stretching themselves and others to see a bigger reality. "I try to get people to see the bigger picture," said Herb, "to see the world through a different set of eyes. " Jacob struggled to integrate diverse components that he saw as relevant to the problem of juvenile crime. He perceived that others on the task force were not seeing the fuller picture. "There are some other things that we need to entertain besides putting kids in jail and putting them in sanction programs." Often, said Chuck, "It's a matter of planting some seeds or sky-writing," when one has only a faint sense of the fuller reality, but acts in confidence that it will come to bear upon the situation, even if one does not experience that fuller reality with any immediacy.

I identify a fourth internal practice as a collection of related practices that leaders employ that have a cumulative effect of nurturing moral vision. That vision continually

unfolds in leaders' consciousness as it shapes and sustains moral conversation with others. By nurturing such vision, they have a capacity to "lead with soul" (Bolman & Deal, 1995). The data demonstrated several ways that leaders hone that vision. They include: (1) a keen sense of purpose that gives meaning to their lives; (2) a long-haul perspective that provides endurance; (3) cores values that affirm the dignity of all persons; (4) significant relationships that provide "moral wells" of critical reflectivity; and (5) finally, authentic expressions of spirituality. A cursory scan of those elements follows.

Transformational leaders have deep <u>sense of purposefulness</u> and personal mission in life. They know their gifts and talents and use them. They often see their work as a "call," "vocation," "service," or "ministry." They seem to have a purpose beyond themselves. They seem to have a passion for something. "It's the part of us that becomes fulfilled when we actualize efforts to achieve that passion," said Sarah. As they grow in age and wisdom, they are able to focus their priorities. Eventually, they seem to get to a point of realizing that they have so much time left "to go around, and you want to make the most of it." They learn to "focus your energies," and to "engage the issues" that arise from those passions. In doing so, they give meaning and purposefulness to their lives. They take responsibility for the communities in which they live. Jacob reflected on his experience as an African-American pastor and captures this sense.

> And God has … brought into my experience such a vast and broad array of experiences, that with that resolve he has equipped me to do exactly what I had resolved to do. … And so, having come in contact with …a purpose and mission for my life…. so when I stand in an arena, or when I sit in an arena, there's a sense of mission for me being there. And if he has done what I believe he has done with me, he hasn't given me all of these things to waste, to hide behind a veil, or to be locked into a box … to offer…. So I am fairly diplomatic with what I say, and yet, with passion …and so I feel that at any point and time that an occasion finds me in presence … that I am there to speak or to say something to the environment of our city. … there are kindred spirits across racial lines that may not have been through the same experiences that I have had, but I sense a sense of mission, and our spirits connect. And that gives me courage as well. … I like who I am. I know who I am. And I know that God is using me as a tool to do something.

Chuck sees his career as a high school principal in a similar vein.

> I see my career as a calling. I don't look at it as a job. I really love my work. I love it. It fulfills a void for me. I've learned that it really, it really allows me to feed, or quench a thirst that I have for helping folk. I see myself as a helper ... if I can help somebody ... for I know that I am who I am now, because of folks helping me. ... I really love it. Yeah, I've got a family, and a son who I hope to send to college next year, and a mortgage. But I would do this just if I could get my bills paid. I'd do it for nothing. Because I really get a charge out of seeing young people develop, when they finally get it, or when you see learning taking place. It's like a light going on.

It is particularly evident that these leaders' sense of purpose and mission goes beyond the satisfaction of their own self interests. There is a real sense of accountability and responsibility to the larger social order. It shapes a moral vision characterized by a long haul perspective that is resilient, versatile, and adaptable. They are leaders who endure and can cope with change well, including changes in their own roles, functions, and organizational affiliations. Because of this, they can avoid burnout and carry on despite past emotional scars. They cope well with failure and rejection. Like Sarah, they are able to "switch boats" when one stream no longer flows with their values and find ways to sail on different currents.

This long haul perspective is evident as leaders "think future." Larry writes his white papers to stimulate his board "two or three years ahead." It influences career paths as leaders imagine new and more creative ways to affect change that make the world a better place. Tim, in his mid-40s, makes no mention of any plans for retirement. Instead, he thinks ahead to the work he wants to do in another twenty years. Steve, at age sixty-two, thinks past his retirement at the community college. He plans to "teach and write, and do more public speaking." Transformational leaders continually seek out new venues to exercise their leadership. There is a sense that each successive life experience is purposeful and adds increased direction and focus on one's mission. There is a sense of "hanging in there," as Elli said. Even in times of adversity and changes in their positional power, Steve tells his focus group that "real leaders can't go

away ... they serve until their last breath." Herb reinforced the same idea as he told a story about encouraging a colleague, saying to the latter, "you can't get burned out. Your obligation is to me not to be burned out. Your obligation is to this society not to be burned out." "You don't stop because you are confronted with obstacles," Fran challenged. "You continue to bring the message forward, because change is not rapid, it is slow ... but the fact that it doesn't come rapidly doesn't mean that you give up on the fact that change is necessary. Its continual. "

Transformational leaders exhibit a fundamental core value that respects the dignity of all human persons. They seem to have an overriding faith in the goodness of humanity, despite the adversities that come along. That respect for others creates windows of engagement with the "thou" of the other, making meaningful forms of discourse always within the realm of possibility (Buber, 1970). It leads Larry to affirm a murderer's "intrinsic human value." It drives Herb's conviction that by appealing to that goodness, "all people can change when they are given the opportunity." This core value resonates well with Bass's notion of individualized consideration evidenced in caring and enabling behaviors of transformational leaders (Bass, 1985). Joe frames it in theological language.

> I truly believe that every human being is a unique part of God, or the divine purpose, and if they don't live that out, something very important is lost. ... so I think the job of a leader is to enable and empower that.

Transformational leadership is about change. Transformational leaders change themselves. Transformational leaders believe others can change. Moral conversation with others is a means to that end. Ultimately, they seem to be driven with a moral vision to make the world a better place. They have a vision of social justice that drives them to want a better world with better people. The whole enterprise is value-laden and begs the moral discourse to make it happen. They want to be a "force for good," and a "voice for the voiceless." They do this, as Fran said, by serving as "the social conscience of the

organization." They do it, as George did, by calling organizations to accountability so that policies reflect shared values. They do, as Steve did, by "challenging the practice of injustice." They do it by scrutinizing their efforts and by asking, as David said, "how can I make this little bit of turf that I stand on a better turf?" And they do it, in Eric's words, by being there for others "who have no where else to turn." In the end, they want to leave a legacy reflective of Debbie's hope:

> When people think about me, sixty years from now, I don't want them to think that I was a leader that built monuments ... but one that helped build bridges, that I had the good of mankind in mind when I give whatever I give.

Perhaps the most frequently cited means of nurturing moral vision were the participants repeated references to a phenomenon that I have come to call moral wells. These are the natural communities of safe places that create the open space for leaders to be reflective and nurture the values that propel their vision and mission in life. In some cases, these wells are moments of solitude like personal quiet time, a walk on the beach, reflective reading, personal retreat, or journal writing where one can "be truly honest with the issues with which I am wrestling, without having to defend them." They can take the form of spiritual practices like prayer and meditation. But in many cases, these moral wells also take the form of meaningful moral communities of significant relationships. They are the relationships that sustain and nurture a leader's moral vision, the places of intimacy where they can be both affirmed and challenged in honest exchanges of moral conversation. These moral wells seem to provide ongoing, continuing sources of moral reflectivity. They serve as sounding boards where one can test and float an idea. They are often marked by intimate relationships with others and life-giving communities. They give support, they stimulate, they correct, and they validate leaders' emerging moral thinking. They are environments of personal growth, feeding the mind and heart, soul and spirit. They are a counterpoint to the oft cited contemporary call

for character education for children. These moral wells feed the hunger for the continued moral development of the human person through the various stages of adult development.

Larry spoke of developing relationships with "pods of friends where we have conversations about what it means to be conscious." Sarah draws strength from her involvement with others who share her roots in the Jewish community. Chuck told me of sustained relationships among "sages" in a fraternity going back forty years. Jacob spoke of "kindred spirits" while Tim drew reference to the intentional group that meets on Wednesday evenings in his home to talk about personal mission. Through it all, one gets a sense that transformational leaders are adept at the art of mentoring, from both ends. They seek the counsel of others and they offer it to others. "Good leaders have to find a way to surround themselves with people that support them in spite of whatever else is happening," said Steve.

The context does not have to always be profound and moving. Often, it simply requires a set of relationships where one can speak out loud in a trusting environment and in ways that clarify one's thinking and motives. Herb described his conversations with several "poker buddies" who gather monthly. He said, "I go over to play poker with them, because they don't mince words with me." Likewise, Ray spoke of a small group of colleagues within his company who are "strong friends." They get together regularly to talk about mutual concerns in a safe environment where they can "really talk through what we feel and why we feel, and how we feel and what the options are for how things will workout." Debbie has a particularly close friend, "and she and I can talk about anything. We don't always agree, but it's a place where I can share my opinion. And she values it." And particularly on the mark were a circle of friends that Patricia called the "Crazy Eights" a group of four couples that she and her husband get together with on a regular basis. She describes all of them as visible and accomplished leaders in the

community. Those relationships have supported her in some of her trials as a public

official.

> I will call them up and say "I'm thinking about this issue, and I'm thinking about making this kind of decision with it. Tell me how you feel about that? Give me your insights." And because we're close friends, they'll say, "Oh, Patricia, that's absurd. You need to think about it this way." And we'll talk about it .. and, yeah, often times I'll change. ... At other times, they covered the wagons [saying] 'we're gonna protect one of our people here, and we're gonna help her.' And the dialogue at that point turned from "what can we can do to help" to "okay, you're saying the things that we appreciate, we're gonna support you, you keep going, you're doing it right" ... and it became this wonderful support group for me.

Finally, the data also demonstrates that the participants in this study were often

motivated by an undercurrent of <u>authentic spirituality</u> that motivates and sustains their

moral vision. Quantitative studies assessing the correlation between spirituality and

transformational leadership has been inconclusive (Zwart, 2000). Assessment is often

difficult due to the taboo nature of spirituality within organizations and more specifically

within the realm of leadership studies.

Participants in this study included persons who participated in formal religious

structures as well as others who did not. But what seems pivotal is the emphasis on

spirituality as a fundamental dimension of their life experience. Without prompting, many

at one time or another interpreted some of their leadership experience and moral

discourse in overt spiritual and or religious categories. Yet, they were consistently wary

of the dangers of false religion, or religion that diminishes moral discourse by rigid

dogma or delusional sentiment. They seem to have a "liberated faith" that accompanies

their advancement toward higher stages of human consciousness (Wilber, 2000), moral

development, and faith development. David's comments capture the nuance here.

Others may not have spoken so directly in religious language, but nonetheless used

imagery that evoked spiritual categories.

External Practices

External practices are overt leader behaviors that stimulate moral conversation. Transformational leaders believe they have a fundamental role to stimulate higher levels of moral judgment. So motivated, they are adept in ways that direct others' attention to moral conflicts, situations and problem that may otherwise go unnoticed (Oser, 1986). My analysis identified five practices: (1) transformational leaders model positive communication dynamics of discourse; (2) they proactively create venues for moral discourse; (3) they know how to use moral conversation strategically; (4) they appeal to social and ethical ideals of service and justice; and (5) they know how to communicate values in subtle ways through playfulness, symbol and ritual.

Transformational leaders stimulate the conversation by being "out there" and modeling moral discourse for others. They are careful about imposing their beliefs on others, yet they are "at home" with their beliefs and are comfortable sharing them with others. They model the positive social and communicative dynamics that stimulate values talk and elicit feedback. Participants cited repeated examples of how the chief executive officer defines the organization's culture and "sets the tone" for meaningful values talk (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996). George's comments are germane here.

> The anointed leader of the organization has a huge role in the tone. ... I can take advantage of certain opportunities and can kind of work magic and engage people in these conversations ... if the attitude is clearly conveyed by the person who has that position of recognized authority, who says, "OK, we are going to do this, it's OK to do this, it's OK to have these conversations. I encourage them. I want you to have it with me. I want you to have it with other people." ... and that just sets the whole thing up.

Such modeling requires that the leader gives "presence" to others and is "seen" by others. As a "walk-around person," Steve is attentive to the reality of others around him. "I'm out there," he says, "listening to the people, talking to them. So they see me as a person that doesn't just sit in an ivory tower or a glass office." Participants spoke of "taking the time" and "having the patience" to "sit down and listen." This suggests that a

listening posture is a discipline, a learned behavior that requires an intentional effort to enter into another's space to "sit" with them as equals, without judgment, in the presence of the "other." Chuck emulated this when he said, "I'm going to try to level the playing field, role up my sleeves and get right into the mix with them."

Leaders often described their practice in terms of "not what you say, but how you say it." It was evident that these leaders are vigilant that they not be perceived as arrogant, intimidating, judgmental, self righteous, deceptive or manipulative. The substance of what one says can be diluted, contaminated, and made impotent otherwise. Vigilance about "how you say it" can combat a host of impediments to the conversation. As a white, articulate male, George cited his own difficulty in choosing the right words to express his values without alienating others.

> I tend to be a little more articulate than some of the people I am dealing with ... a little more righteous than they are. ... A lot of times the people who are in my position are better educated. ... One of the impediments is trying to find the right way to phrase things, and the right opportunity to say things, so that people don't feel like they are being attacked ... when you raise a moral issue.

Leaders remove the rough edges of their discourse by disclosing their own struggle as they think through their beliefs and values. By "thinking out loud," they demonstrate a humility in that they "don't know all the answers" and are themselves "searching." This sort of behavior demonstrates that they have "the courage to be vulnerable" and can be "open to criticism," said Dan. They are comfortable in acknowledging their limitations. They don't take themselves overly serious. They have a capacity to be transparent to themselves and others, to "be themselves" with no false pretenses. Jacob described it in terms of the "freedom to be myself." Only then can meaningful moral discourse happen, where "you get to the real gut level of communication." It's a matter "of being naked," Jacob said, "where I can just be all out there." Joe captured the same idea:

One of the main things that I keep discovering is that when I reveal my own mixed nature, when I reveal my doubts, when I reveal my own imperfections ... a lot of times that is the most constructive leadership thing. I think that's a part of real heroes ... that they were human beings. I mean, Gandhi was a great man but he was a crummy parent and he was a crummy husband. You know, he wasn't good at all. You know, picture a hero or heroine ... they had their feet of clay and now we are seeing them ... and I think that's great.

By being transparent and vulnerable, leaders model the risk taking involved in self reflectivity. That disclosure, that honesty, and that transparency seems to evoke others' respect and motivates others to emulate similar disclosure and self reflectivity. The leader is seen as one who, like others, is struggling to make sense of reality. It makes it "OK" for others to ask questions and to scrutinize values, as was the case in Peggy's lunchroom conversation prompted by a news story on sexual harassment (Appendix M, story #1). The whole dynamic creates the sort of open space conveyed in the "campfire" metaphor described earlier.

There seems to be a real power to influence others in this transparency where the leader becomes vulnerable in the presence of others. For it to happen, the leader must be sufficiently secure in order to risk the self disclosure. Out of it comes a chemistry that solidifies others' respect. Larry captured the paradox. "You are speaking from a position of security and you are OK with vulnerability. Integrity, then, becomes a matter of being true to yourself, without having to defend it. Integrity is a form of defenseless-ness." Such a posture has a disarming effect on others, and diminishes chances that others may feel threatened or intimidated.

But there are certain qualifiers to this notion of leader transparency. Lisa' s comments presents a negative instance. She was concerned that leaders who hold authority positions in the workplace need to keep "a certain distance. You can't let everybody into your personal life, and you don't want to get into theirs." Others expressed conditions that make transparency more or less appropriate. Jacob suggested that vulnerability is more likely to occur in the intentional venues of moral

discourse, which are less likely in the workplace. Chuck described transparency as a "growth process" that he has learned over the years as he has become more skilled in a participative management style. And George sounded a note of skepticism. "You don't see it in the public realm or in business. You don't see people ever admitting that they are wrong ... unless they are under indictment." But Joe countered back, "I don't think we see it as much as we should, but I do think people are doing more of it." Marsha agreed, citing Senator's Bob Kerry's recent admission of his own questionable ethical practice during the Vietnam War.[7]

Leaders model moral discourse in other ways. Participants underscored the importance of active listening that seeks understanding, suspends judgment, and avoids temptation to immediately rebuff or defend. Ryan described his own practice.

> I would try to bring out of you my understanding to the point I can iterate what I believe you feel, in such a way that you can nod your head and say, "Yes! That's what I'm trying to say. That's what I feel." I think that helps me greatly to be able to respond and hopefully the other person would also understand how I feel ... without passing any judgment on it. I think that's where you get to some common ground. ... to understand, not to be in the transmit mode, not being the, "let me respond to that" kind of thing ... but really seeking to truly understand what the other person is trying to say.

These leaders have a capacity to "tune in" with receiver antennae that allows them to hear how others respond to their agenda and what alternate perspectives others may wish to put on the table. They strive to "see through the other's eyes." True to the mark of transformational leadership, they listen in ways that serve to enable others. The key, said Ray, is the suspension of judgment. "You don't take judgment into the discussion." One needs to "wipe the slate clean" and go in with an open mind that assumes the good intentions of all participants, and that all have "a legitimate honest feeling, commitment and passion" to whatever they value. One has to be able to respect

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[7] At the time of the focus groups, there was national media coverage of an announcement by Kerry wherein he questioned the morality of his complicity in a military engagement with enemy forces in Vietnam that involved the killing of women and children.

those values whether or not one agrees with the other. This listening posture is not only non-judgmental; it's non-coercive and honors the freedom of the other. As Ray said, it "gives each person the benefit of the doubt." The whole enterprise is like a "voyage of discovery" filled with a latent hope that the discourse will reap new meaning "in the existential gaps of life awaiting enunciation and clarification" (Elliott, 1994).

As transformation leaders age, they often exhibit an increased capacity to reflect on values and beliefs. With age comes wisdom and often the shift to a more tactful and indirect style with "softer edges." As they age, they are able to find new ways to influence others even without their former positional power base. Steve made the observation that when leaders are overly invested in their roles and then step away from those positions, they often "fall off the radar screen, or worse, become cynics." Where in their younger years they may have had the courage to speak out more readily, now in their 50s or 60s, precisely when they are at the stage to make another level of contribution, they retreat from the issues, perhaps thinking to themselves, "I don't have to go through this." But true transformational leaders act otherwise. They come to discover an increased capacity to model moral discourse for others through mentoring relationships. They are perceived as more approachable, perhaps because they are less certain, less sure of the "answers." Marsha described the phenomenon.

> You reach a certain point in your career, where you turn around and you're the Dean, and people are calling you and asking for your advice about everything. You've become a leader in town, and your name is well known, and suddenly everybody is calling you for this question or that question. And I am not sure I always have the right answer. So, you kind of hold back, and so, what I would rather become is a facilitator for a conversation.

Over time, others have come to trust their leadership not because leaders have asked for it, but because "they've earned it." They are approachable because others know them to be persons who can listen and "not overact and shoot the messenger." Not surprising, the data on this descriptor came largely from older participants in the

twilight of their careers. They come to a point of revisioning "what really matters." That maturity can accept lowered immediate expectations, yet still maintain sight on more distant goals. "As I have gotten more mature," said David, "it's not so much that you win the battle, but win the war." As he anticipates his retirement from the school system in the next two years, Chuck seemed to have this sense of a long range vision juxtaposed upon a less grandiose one. He simply wants to "plant seeds."

> It took me a while to evolve to this point. ... I am in the twilight of my career. ... I find myself at home just planting some seeds and see if they'll grow, and not really wanting to be in the forefront. ... I don't have to do it at all. I don't have to be out front. ... I think I am passed that, and now I am concerned about the goal being achieved opposed to my getting a feather or a plaque.

Besides modeling moral discourse for others, leaders in this study evidenced a proclivity to be proactive in <u>creating venues for moral conversation</u>. They look for "door openers" to get the conversation moving. They see the opportunities, the "teachable moments," and take the time to promote values talk and moral reflectivity among their colleagues and associates. In doing so, they give legitimacy to that kind of conversation. They create "islands" of moral discourse "in the ocean of practice" (Oser, 1986). Steve put it this way.

> Every problem, or every situation in the workplace presents itself with the opportunity to look at the moral issue of it ... in dealing with students, in dealing with the faculty, dealing with curriculum, in my business ... I mean, that's the kind of thing we may be looking at. ... Every single one of them deals with the possibility of getting the staff to look at it in those kinds of ways.

Leaders create the venue by knowing how to effectively use the power of their "bully pulpits, taking every opportunity they can, when they can." They seize the moment as they "set the table of discourse." In some cases, they set the table by creating an intentional event like Tim's practice where he simply promoted the "space" for United Way agency executives to engage one another in a support group where they could bring to the table their experiences, problems and moral dilemmas. Sarah attempts to do

the same as she talked about her efforts to organize a center where school principals could have a venue "to interact with their peers" and "share their craft and learn." It is evident that much of that craft is value based. Her vision is for a "safe place" where principals can engage in moral reflectivity that impacts their action for change. Carol's experience with a civic association is the same as they regularly cast a discussion of some appropriate "controversial issue" in the context of their regularly meetings.

In other cases, leaders create the venue by injecting moral discourse into ordinary proceedings and day to day office interactions. Those are the numerous "situational events" of moral conversation that present themselves in the workplace and civil society. Leaders sense the teachable moment and suggest to the other, "Well, come on, let's sit down now ... let's talk about that." They seize the moment of opportunity. They express their own value sentiments and purposefully follow it with an invitation to others to respond and give feedback.

Staff meetings were often cited as regular opportunities to inject that kind of discourse, so long as the meeting process allows for some free and open space not dictated by a fixed agenda. Some employ creative methods like Donna's use of the daily newspaper to reflect on values in the course of weekly staff meetings. Others spoke of "interweaving it" into meetings around "whatever the issues are that you deal with." Chuck purposefully invites candor in his staff meetings and follows them up by publishing and distributing minutes. In the days that follow, he seeks out others asking them what they thought of the meeting's proceedings.

Transformational leaders know how to use moral discourse strategically. "There's a time and a place for everything," said Cindy. "So, it's being a little more strategic about how and where you make those statements." The discourse is strategic because it purposefully aims for results that serve organizational ends, and yet seeks to evaluate those ends. The latter is a critical point. Without it, the discourse risks becoming

corrupted as a means that simply serves the leader's predisposed purposes. At that point, it becomes manipulative and belies the rubrics of genuine transformational leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Ciulla, 1998a).

This raises a critical point in the literature on communicative ethics and the distinction between communicative action and strategic action (Moon, 1995, p. 146). For Habermas, strategic action falls short of communicative action because it is rationally employed in order to influence the decisions of one's opponent in order simply to achieve one's own goals. For the speech action to be truly "communicative," Habermas argues that one must not seek to manipulate the opponent by causing the other to do something that the leader is already predisposed to. For the discourse to be "communicative action," it must be driven by the mutual desire of all parties (Rost, 1991) to attain a harmony of perspectives on emerging shared meaning that provides the basis for a common understanding of the situation. To summarize this qualification, communicative moral discourse, though it may be practiced strategically, must at some point attain a level of shared meaning if it is to be transformational rather than manipulative. I am suggesting that transformational leaders have mastered the skill of using moral discourse 'strategically' while maintaining the posture of communicative action. Though the data on this point is limited, there are several common themes that emerge from the data and serve to illustrate specific ways that leaders employ moral discourse strategically. I identify seven means.

(1) Focusing Priorities. Leaders in this study use moral discourse as the "crucible" to focus priorities and scrutinize the congruence between values and organizational practice. They address not only issues of means but ends as well. The latter is critical to Rost's (1991, 1995) challenge for a new paradigm of leadership ethics. The practice promotes double-loop learning (Argyris, 1977) through critical thinking about "business as usual." These dynamics were reflected in Elli's and Peggy's

challenge to their boards to gain deeper insight by scrutinizing actions in light of their organizations' larger purposes. It was evident in Fran's concern that her organization has an obligation beyond its immediate mission as a health care provider. She reminds her colleagues of the need to be responsive "to the larger community." And it was demonstrated in Sarah's rigorous initiatives to seek congruity between her own passion and values and the values postured by the organization that she works for.

Moral discourse is a means to focus priorities in situations that involve group decisionmaking where the dialogue brings forth multiple and conflicting values. In the process of the discourse, those multiples values come to be seen within a hierarchy of values. Some are judged more important than others. Effective leaders are able to guide colleagues through those turbulent waters. A choice is eventually made on rational grounds that the good of one particular value is perceived as greater than the good of another competing value. The discourse is critical to that discernment process as participants think critically about an issue in the light of particular circumstances, historical situations, and individual needs. An example of this dynamic was Jacob's decision with church colleagues to provide housing for a destitute woman "of ill repute."

(2) Timing. From the standpoint of strategy, timing is everything. These leaders indicated that it is important to know when to speak their values and engage the conversation. They choose their words, and choose them well, saying them at the "right time" to maximize impact. There is a sense of thinking ahead to some future point, and preparing for it, as in the case of Larry's "white papers" and Chuck's "seed planting." Leaders have to know "when to get the point across at a precise time," said Steve. "My style is to let people discuss till there's a particular point at which, if you could make a point of something, it changes the whole direction. Timing is so very critical." Sometimes timing demands not waiting, but acting with immediacy. Part of the skill is knowing when

to act "quickly," as Ray said, "and get it out on the table." In other cases, it requires a sense of knowing the "teachable moment."

(3) Weighing the Costs and Consequences. This strategic consideration is at the heart of the earlier discussion regarding the costs and benefits of the discourse. Leaders know when it's worth it and when it's not. They know "when to hold and when to fold," when to speak, when not to speak and when to withdraw when costs outweigh the benefit. They are savvy and can "read the tea leaves." They can assess the prospect for efficacy, determine if their speech can make a difference, and act accordingly. They can distinguish between moral discourse that's important, having some prospect for meaning making that leads to action or change, and false discourse that is simply a form of "ego massage," power ploy or manipulation. As they weigh the costs, they factor the consequences of their speech action on the good of the larger whole and the good of the community in which they function. There is marked sense of humility in their approach, recognizing their own limitations and those of others.

(4) Leveraging. Leaders who are skilled in the practice of values talk have a sense for the economy of moral language and know how to "save it up" for things that really matter. They have a realistic sense of those things that can be changed or accomplished, without undue fretting over shortcomings and imperfection. They realize that "a lot of things really don't matter." They do the best that they can with the resources that are available to them. They know how to use their speech in constructive ways that build synergy and momentum as they elicit collective ownership on ideas, vision, and the "big picture." These leaders can conserve energy and resources, and know when to "pour it on" in the kinds of discourse that will have the greatest impact. They strategically solicit input from those whose support and collaboration can maximize returns.

(5) Doing Homework. Diligent preparation is an important component of these leader's use of values talk. Because they study issues and research alternatives, they

can bring value-based solutions to the table of conversation. To do otherwise risks leaving participants in a frustrated state of disillusionment and moral quandary. The alternatives they bring forth are not given and predefined, but often serve as a springboard to other yet unrealized solutions to moral dilemmas. But in the absence of such preparation, the discourse may not have been able to get to that point. The research points to some hopeful solution that can be "worked through" in the art of shared discernment and negotiation. Joe again made reference to the style of Gandhi whose social reform campaigns typically begin with prolonged periods of study and analysis as activists took time to research findings regarding a particular situation. The information gathering would itself be a practice in values talk, as the campaign would gain input from a host of resource people and perspective. One needs to "spend an immense amount of time figuring out what the problem is and what the alternatives are, and who the players are, and what you can do about it." Only then can one posture a position and call others to consider it. There is "awful lot of waiting and watching and asking questions, and learning ..."

(6) Building Shared Ownership: Leaders in this study see moral discourse as a means to get "buy in" and collective ownership. Values talk builds group solidarity as participants assume a common vision about what constitutes their common good. Leaders do this by making sure their discourse reaches out to key people with whom they communicate directly, hoping those persons will become "wise advocates" who in turn influence others, thus having a multiplier effect. Like Chuck, they strategically include those who think differently, anticipating dissenters and proactively reaching out to include their concerns. They know how to get their ideas "out there" to stimulate other's thinking and to "keep a fire under the process." They are diligent about making sure that the position taken is not perceived as their own, the as one belonging to the group.

These leaders are not adverse to practice a discourse that appeals to individuals on the basis of self interest and individual need. But the appeal to those self interests becomes a path to engage others in efforts to see a bigger picture. That approach demonstrates well the interplay between transactional and transformational modes of leadership, confirming Bass' insistence that the styles are not mutually exclusive. Effective leaders can draw from both styles. But to the extent leaders demonstrate the transformational approach, they engage others in moral discourse that challenges participants to think beyond their own self interest and consider the needs and interests of the wider community. Because that path goes through self interests, the larger common interests can be owned by a multiplicity of selves. These leaders seemed to know that, reflecting Chuck's comment, "When folks have a clear understanding of the goal and feel as though they are actual participants in the process, you get more buy-in."

(7)) Flexibility of Style. Part of these leaders' strategy is knowing when and how to move along the direct-indirect continuum as they express their values and beliefs. I have already addressed this dynamic under the discussion of style. The capacity to know how and when to be flexible is a matter of strategy. Transformational leaders are versatile and adaptable, able to assess a situation and determine how best to engage others in moral discourse depending on circumstances. This manner of flexibility is not unlike the dynamics of situational leadership where a leader's choice of communication style factors an assessment of others' motivational and capacity levels (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Other variables that can influence flexibility of style are the arena of the discourse venue, the leader's role and power base, the leader's assessment of others' awareness levels, and whether the leader sees the pending moral decision as her or his own to make, or as a matter for the group to decide. To the extent the leader pursues the latter, one is more likely to use an indirect approach.

Thus far I have addressed three external practices: modeling moral discourse for others, proactively creating venues for the discourse, and using moral discourse strategically. I conclude this section with two additional practices. Though not as overt as the first three, they are external behaviors that stimulate moral reflectivity and discourse among others.

Transformational leaders appeal to ideals of service and justice by calling others to higher social ethical standards that affirm the dignity of all humanity. They are committed to improving the common good and to making the world a better place. They seek to move the discourse beyond personal values, character ethics, and internal business ethics to a wider social domain. Larry described his efforts to call his "huddle of quarterback" and "eagles" to consider values beyond their own material well being and ego needs. As a philanthropist, he acknowledges others' self interest in wanting to "leave a legacy," yet he challenges them to a more selfless consideration of the needs of others and the community's well being. Elli described her efforts to persuade a colleague to "realize that there is some injustice" in non-inclusive prayer at high school graduation. Steve encouraged his staff to get involved in community service programs. Patricia sensed the injustice suffered by the three teachers who were victims of sexual harassment. Joe called his constituents to consider the plight of the homeless. Herb challenged the judge to recognize his obligation to reach beyond his own racist beliefs in ways that raise the moral standard and higher good of the community. And Debbie talked of her advocacy for persons "who I think are done an injustice because of their circumstances."

Finally, the data gave oblique evidence to another leader practice that stimulates the moral discourse. Subtle as it might be, it is a capacity to "lead with soul" (Bolman & Deal, 1995) by speaking and acting in ways that facilitate meaning making through the use of symbol, story, ritual, celebration, laughter and play. The context presumes an

organizational culture framed in ways that give legitimacy to aesthetics, spirituality, and the human search for meaning (Bolman & Deal, 1991). The practice is evidenced in messages that evoke values below the surface of ordinary communication. They raise the bar of human expectation by appealing to a sense of wisdom, courage and compassion. They often occur in "lighter moments." For instance, birthday celebrations, awards ceremonies, and the amalgam of traditions that mark an organization's particular culture. They are typically informal moments imbued with meaning as they provide forums where participants' shared discourse becomes a "mutual quest for spirit and heart." Its language transcends rational forms of discourse and finds meaning in the symbolic expression of story, symbol and myth.

Brian seems to intuitively know the importance of a holiday party that is inclusive of other religious traditions beside Christian. Simply by participating in it, the social gathering communicates the values of diversity and tolerance without overtly talking about them. Diversity awareness in this "fun" environment builds organizational solidarity in ways that legal protocols for diversity in the workplace cannot. Participants spoke of the importance of social interaction and how it builds the bonds of familiarity and trust that creates a safe place for values talks. Joe believes that it's important to "interact socially," and until that happens, "the moral thing doesn't come out." Debbie offered evidence about the characteristics of an organizational culture that facilitates this kind of discourse. She noted that her recent move from a large city department to a smaller division provided a far greater forum for this kind of informal interaction. "Now," she says, "we celebrate birthdays once a month and we have an informal conversation that I have never had in another group." These conversations seem to build trusting relationships as participants come to see one another "in a different light" and see each other "as a person."

Participants talked about moments of playing and recreating with their colleagues. They described rituals of birthday and holiday celebration that provide forums to express beliefs and values that may not otherwise be expressed, like a shared prayer of gratitude at an office Thanksgiving holiday meal. Inside jokes that playfully "tease" in a spirit of fun and affection can build mutual esteem and the bonds of teamwork. In other cases, participants talked about the importance of sharing occasional meals together. The office lunchroom or snack room can provide the opening to a values conversation that later finds its way into the normal business discourse. Once a year, Lisa takes her staff to a theatrical performance and they share an occasional lunch together. It's a way of saying, "I value you ... I want to break bread with you... I want to enjoy something of the arts that will enhance all of our lives." In the frivolity and lightheartedness, freed from the urgency of task, participants can take time to be themselves, with no expectations, and be fully accepted despite the differences of their beliefs and values.

Chapter Summation

This chapter has attempted to lay out a variety of categories that give shape to the form and practice of moral conversation, with particular focus on how leaders promote it within the organizations in which they function. Moral discourse takes place within particular venues of conversation. Those venues are defined by the components of arena, temporal event, issue and value(s). The data demonstrates a number of dynamics that can either impede or stimulate meaningful values talk. Individual dynamics are the motives, experiences, behaviors and dispositions that persons bring into the conversation. Other dynamics reflect social and cultural contexts that may impede the conversation as well as communication dynamics that positively stimulate it. The practice of moral discourse demonstrates specific speech actions. Initiation,

intervention and response are speech actions that leaders use to positively engage the conversation and constructively move it forward. Conversely, actions of withholding, withdrawal and abdication disengage the conversation and generally, though not always, have a negative impact. Transformational leaders have a style of moral speech that moves on a continuum between indirect and direct and their moral talk serves a variety of functions. Finally, leaders' exercise of moral discourse demonstrates a number of specific internal and external skills and practices that stimulate the conversation. Internal practices facilitate leader's personal growth and moral development while external practices serve to positively motivate others to engage the conversation.

Chapter 5: APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The analysis presented in this chapter builds on the previous chapter by addressing the application of leaders' use of moral discourse in the public arena. The prior discussion identified three arenas where public moral discourse can occur: (1) the workplace; (2) civil society; and (3) the formal political bodies that deliberate upon and formulate public policy. In this chapter, the two latter arenas are compressed under the general heading of democracy. Thus, this chapter makes applications to the workplace and democracy and considers the implications for theory and practice therein. I interpret the practice of moral discourse in those settings through transformational leadership theory, communitarian political theory, and discourse ethics.

Moral Discourse in the Workplace

Just as the leader sets the tone of the discourse, so does the organizational culture. This section will explore how the culture of the organization influences the quality of moral conversation in the workplace and how moral discourse, in turn, can shape that culture. Organizational culture can stimulate or impede moral conversation. One cannot engage colleagues in moral dialogue within an organization whose culture does not support it, value it, and promote it. The culture, climate and structure of the organization often condition whether or not it is fertile environment for moral conversation among employees. This section begins with an overview of some of the factors that make moral discourse difficult in the workplace. It then considers the implications of moral discourse in areas of organizational development and business ethics.

<u>Challenges in the Workplace</u>

I have already demonstrated that there are numerous individual, social and cultural factors than can impede or inhibit the practice of moral conversation. In addition to those previously cited, the workplace presents additional challenges that can make moral conversation difficult. I provide a cursory review of five dynamics that were evidenced in the data of this study.[8] They are: (1) dominant organizational culture; (2) mission blind sight; (3) the problem of power; (4) productivity concerns; and (5) rules and procedures. Several of these factors resonate with Bird's (1996) listing of organizational factors that contribute to moral silence and blindness in the workplace.

(1) <u>Dominant Organizational Culture</u>. Just as the larger culture is shaped by a dominant discourse that constrains the conversation, so can the culture of the organization restrict values talk. A leader who sees her or his charge as defined within the limits of that discourse is not likely to encourage others to engage in talk that moves outside those boundaries of acceptable and politically correct ways of thinking and acting. Like individuals and societies, organizations can use maps and patterns of consciousness to block moral talk. The practice of moral discourse requires an ongoing organizational commitment to ask unasked questions and to go outside the box in ways that emulate Argyris' (1977) concept of double loop learning. The dominant discourse often prevents that. It can blind conscience and sustain denial (Bird, 1996).

When leadership fails to consider matters that warrant moral scrutiny and abdicates the moral conversation, those practices tend to reinforce the blindness of others within the organization. Fear of job security and employee disempowerment only serve to sustain the dominant discourse propagated by a false leadership, so all parties

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[8] Due to space limitations and the interpretive nature of this chapter's themes, I provide only a summation of the data findings, with few references to specific participants' statements and stories.

can end up "looking the other way." The dominant discourse presumes an established end that is unquestioned. If organizational affiliation requires ascent to those unquestioned ends, to raise issue with them risks being perceived as disloyalty and in opposition to the organization's purposes. Thus, the discourse is limited to like-minded participants who think in predictable categories that sustain the status quo. Innovation spawned by diversity of ideas and the tussle of conflicting values is minimized. The discourse sets up a defense frame that can only respond to moral queries within defined parameters framed by a limited values base, and does not go outside that comfort zone. Performance standards are delimited by outcome measures that look in only those defined areas, while ignoring ends.

(2) Mission Blind Sight. The organization's mission shapes the dominant discourse in ways that can help or hinder the prospect for values talk. So long as the mission withstands the rigor of moral critique, it can focus discourse and serve as a barometer to gauge alignment with organizational values. It does that as a tool for discourse by recollecting the ends that the organization serves, and assessing moral action on those standards.

But the mission needs to be continually re-evaluated in the context of changing realities that call forth appropriate moral responsibility. If an organization functions as a moral community, then the discourse goes on in ways that continually evaluate not only the process of means, but the content of ends as well (Rost, 1995). Ethical leadership asks if proposed changes that leaders and collaborators intend are morally acceptable. That content includes policy decisions, products, and services. But all too often, the mission is not evaluated, though it may have been the fruit of a meaningful values conversation in a bygone day. Instead, it is manipulated to serve alternate ends driven by the demands of bottom line productivity.

In the absence of re-evaluation, the mission can sanction a myopic and singular point of view that stunts growth and development as it demands ideological commitment without the benefit of moral critique. In that case, the moral discourse has ceased to validate the mission. The problem of mission blind sight can posture a false sense of esprit de corps that restricts legitimate dissent by absolutizing leadership around the mission and demanding obedience to perceived authorities. This is particularly problematic in authoritarian and hierarchical structures that are driven with a rigid chain of command. Moral discourse on ends is less likely in such organizational cultures. Compliance to the predisposed end is a given, unquestionably assumed, and demanded by the those in authority.

Finally, the data also demonstrated instances where leaders operated amidst two or more competing organizational missions. In a number of those instances, the more ethically responsible mission was viewed as a "sidebar" subsumed within the larger operational organizational mission. An example of such might be the situation of a corporate vice president in charge of public relations or community relations. Such an individual has an agenda more likely to be influenced by social and community values extraneous to more internal operations of the organization. There may be conflicting values beneath the two competing missions. Further, it is likely that the larger operational mission will not withstand as much rigor of moral critique as can the "sidebar" mission.

(3) The Power Problem. Power is akin to leadership because it is the capacity to influence others. How it is exchanged within organizations can shape the quality of moral conversation. People have power when they have the ability to affect others' beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action. The data demonstrated that the dynamics of power are complex and can either stimulate or impede moral discourse in the workplace. To the degree it impedes discourse, power is more likely to demonstrate qualities of

transactional modes of leadership. To the degree it stimulates the conversation, it reflects a more transformational approach.

Traditional sources of power, such as those put forth by French and Raven (1959) are transactional at their core, because they conceive of power in the context of a dyadic relationship between the person influencing and the person being influenced. Even those forms that are not oppressive or coercive, such as referent power and the power of expertise, are fundamentally transactional because power flows one way, from the leader to the follower. To the contrary, Burns' (1978) approach does not see power as an entity to use others to achieve one's own ends. Instead, power is multidirectional, occurs in the context of relationships, and is used by both leaders and followers toward the mutual pursuit of shared purposes (Rost, 1991).

Power is unequal in the leader-follower relationships, and that is precisely what makes transformational leadership so difficult. Both Burns and Rost warn us that the nature of the compact is inherently unequal. Yet, responsive leadership requires that democratic processes be in place that affirm the rights of followers to participate and to gain access to the knowledge they need to make responsible choices. If knowledge is power, then power must be shared. Rost goes so far as to suggest that power, of its nature, is coercive and antithetical to the aims of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership must be a relationship based on influence, not power, as its seeks to persuade others to take on "mutually agreed upon purposes" where all collaborators "achieve consensus, assume responsibility, work for the common good, and build community" (Rost, 1990 p. 124). The influence is multidirectional and noncoercive. Coercive leadership is a fundamental trait of transactional leadership, and may be a legitimate element of the style of the transformational leader, recognizing the total range of style that leaders employ (Bass, 1985). But coercive leadership is nonetheless transactional, and consequently cannot serve the needs of effective moral

discourse that presumes an equal playing field. In short, power more than likely dilutes the discourse. For the discourse to happen, power must be equalized. That happens in one of two ways. Either by reducing the power of the one who has more, or empowering the others who lack it. The conclusion seems to underscore that moral discourse in organizations is more likely to occur when leaders draw less on their power base and more on their capacity to engage relationships of mutuality that seek to influence others through the art of persuasion.

Still, power is a fact of leadership and needs to be considered in the context of moral discourse. Northhouse (1997) distinguishes between position power and personal power. Position power refers to power that a person derives from an office or role or rank in the organization. The data in this study surely demonstrated ways in which position power can promote moral reflectivity. These were generally evidenced in direct styles of moral discourse where leaders made effective use of their positions and "set the tone" for moral reflection and action. Those leaders know they can make a difference and can effectively persuade others. They are cognizant that what they have to say "has more weight" because they hold authority within the organization. But the downside is the inherent disparity of power that such a posture presumes. Often, followers hold back from speaking out when they are exposed to such direct moral exhortation by those who hold position power. Steve's comments were particularly revealing in this regard.

> Well, you know, I think my style stops it [moral discourse]. I really do. When I'm on my soapbox, you could call it that, I am so insistent, I am so strong. In some ways I shut off other discussion, which is probably not smart on my part, but sometimes you get frustrated at that point, and then you just say, "Well, we're going to do it this way." ... I mean, it's a role.

In such situations, followers may not be as forthcoming, either because they hold up the leader on a pedestal, are intimidated, have concerns for job security, or are otherwise faced with an impediment that constrains their participation in the discourse. In

the absence of that mutual engagement, transformational leadership is not operative and moral discourse is cut short.

By contrast, personal power is power gotten through validation by one's followers and collaborators. Such power is available to all participants in the conversation, even those who lack authority positions within the organization. Participants spoke of the "moral power" of persons who are outside the "inner circle" and those in mid-level management, who lack the power base of an authority or expert position. Personal power is not dependent on one's position or social status, though those factors can surely help give one a platform to influence others. When one's power source is personal rather than positional, a leader can still find means to influence others when he or she is no longer in the position of authority or retires. Only personal power can be said to be truly transformational because it takes place in the context of mutuality, freed from coercion. The power is transformational because it is enabling of others, having the effect of empowering others.

Effective transformational leaders, even those who tend to be more direct, walk a difficult tightrope between their position power and personal power. They seem to have a knack to mitigate the disparity of power caused by their role-based position power. They know when it is appropriate to step aside from their positional power base, get in the trenches, and become vulnerable and transparent to others whom they seek to influence. The effect is often disarming of others, creating a receptivity in others that allows others to stand "in the huddle of quarterbacks" and be empowered through their own sources of personal power, even though they may lack positional power.

(4) Concerns for Productivity. High task orientation in the work culture can also be a deterrent to substantive moral conversation. Moral discourse can be viewed as inefficient because it requires too much time. The consequence reduces bottom line productivity. Participants often cited how these concerns undercut values talk. "There's a

job to be done," and you have a "mission to accomplish." The myopic concern demonstrates a quantitative bias that measures performance solely in terms of productivity. But if other values are not discussed, there can be a trade off in quality of life dimensions that are not assessed through standard forms of performance assessment. By its nature, moral discourse is qualitative as it seeks shared meaning by addressing underlying values that are operative within the organizational culture.

Moral conversation requires time and deliberation. It can be more fruitful when freed of the demands for productivity. When it does go on in the workplace, it is typically limited to situational temporal events that are narrow in scope and focused on the immediacy of solving a particular problem. The more thoughtful evaluative processes that occur in the intentional settings of retreats and staff development days are less likely due to performance demand workloads. Part of the problem here, too, is the general negative disposition that many have regarding meetings. Meetings are often seen as a passive activity, where one simply "attends" to the agenda put forth by others. To the extent that meetings can be designed as open spaces and implemented in more participative manners, moral discourse may be more likely to occur.

Finally, concern for productivity can make leaders unaware of situations that present opportunities for values talk. They are simply "too busy." Questions of moral import do not appear on the radar screen, causing non-engaging speech actions, whether that be abdication, withdrawal, or withholding.

(5) Rules and Procedures. Every organization has its rules and protocols to assure efficiency and accountability. But there is a cost. Rules can pre-empt moral talk by defining unquestionable norms of behavior. Protocols set the stage for a certain kind of organizational determinism which precludes continued review and assessment in the light of moral discourse. Rules and procedures can surely serve the good by creating standards for performance. But such accountability may only be a form of coercive

proceduralism that demands compliance. There can be no presumption to moral ascent to those policies on the part of those who participate in the organization unless those policies are the fruit of shared values born of moral conversation. Persons are accountable to their consciences as well as to the company's policies. The discourse must find means to allow individuals to speak their values, even if that talk amounts to dissent with company policy.

Procedures can also enshrine decisions with finality that makes them unquestionable, further constraining moral talk. The presumption is that once a decision is made, it cannot be re-evaluated, and cannot be reversed. When those decisions are enshrined in authority or legal sanction, they are further removed from the prospect of review. Like a mission that is never re-evaluated, those decisions are seen as unquestioned ends, demanding compliance. Rigidly defined rules and procedures are typically the mark of bureaucracies that have limited person to person engagement which is the very centerpiece of moral conversation. Hence, of all organizations, bureaucracies are least prepared to engage in moral talk.

In the purview of U.S. law, the written record is preeminent. Contracts, personnel handbooks, codes of ethics, and organizational policy and procedural manuals often are used as the sole measure of legitimacy within organizational systems. For the same reason, written records of business proceedings and meetings are used to hold people accountable to the decisions they make. Curiously, if meetings are allowed to venture into moral talk, those comments are often viewed as digressions and irrelevant to the final decision, and are often excluded from the written records of many meetings. If that discussion is included in the record, it tends to be limited to the "facts" side of the fact/value split that marks so much of public discourse. Should the decision be reviewed, those qualitative, affective, value-based and sometimes non-rational notions cannot be

retrieved to understand the participants' sense of the dialogue in the context of the "now" moment in which the decision was made.

When the CEO's tone, the dominant culture and the rules are all going one way, the culture severely constricts the dissenting voice from having any legitimacy. In most cases, those voices are never heard, even if such persons should have the courage to speak out. If they are heard, they often suffer some form of sanction. When leadership and protocol turns a deaf ear to moral discourse, those who wish to engage the conversation must often do it outside the normal modes of organizational communication, and often at great personal risk. Few do.

The practice of values talk is itself validated when it functions under certain rules, for instance, Habermas' (1990a) rules for discourse ethics. But often the rules of discourse are superficial and procedural, and do not engage the depth of criteria called for by Habermas' theory of communicative action. Organizations that on appearance give legitimacy to values talk, may actually restrict it by rules that provide only a surface accommodation of moral talk. In reality, they may posture artificial forums of moral conversation that pretend to empower employees. But in the end, they block such talk from influencing change in company policy (Ciulla, 1998a). In other cases, organizations may be so invested in processes of discourse that they become unduly wedded to them. In changing times that deal with changing issues, old ways of engaging the conversation may no longer be adequate. Though they may nobly claim to uphold the "process" more than the "product," the process itself may become a product of sorts, an end in itself, and beyond reproach. Once that happens, genuine moral discourse is subverted because it is constrained by unquestioned ends.

Implications for Organizational Development

The data point to several ways that moral discourse operates within the context of the organizational culture of the workplace. It both shapes the culture and is

influenced by the culture. To the degree that transformational leaders promote moral talk, they can contribute to the formation of more vibrant workplace organizations. Moral discourse sustains organizations through the stress of change, providing resilience that nurtures human solidarity among the participants, while maintaining commitment to the organization's evolving mission (Kotter, 1990).

(1) Moral discourse advances organizational learning. It does that by developing within its members the habit to think critically and reflectively, and to continually inform standard practice with new insight born of feedback from the outer environment. Moral discourse is a way to become a learning organization (Brown, 1999). It is a means to interpret decisions, policies and practices by interfacing internal processes with new information from the system environment in which the organization functions (Senge, 1990). That environment reaches outside the immediate structures of the organization and considers the social, political and economic forces that impinge on the organization. Moral discourse has the capacity to engender double loop learning because it facilitates the questioning of "business as usual," can detect errors, and through moral resolve, correct them (Argyris, 1977; Argyris & Schoen, 1977).

(2) Moral discourse advances organizational vision and mission. It lies at the center of the very communication process that leaders and their collaborators use as they unpack shared meaning that gives substance to shared vision. Its practice cuts to the heart of transformational leadership because it operates within an organizational culture that acknowledges that all constituents of the organization want to grow and be involved. Its practice presumes that leaders believe their colleagues and employees can give meaningful feedback and share in the mutual task of formulating and re-formulating the organization's vision and mission. Through moral discourse, all participants accept and seek responsibility for their collective actions as they pursue the company's goals. Transformational leaders look for opportunities to solicit the input of their constituents, as

Chuck said, "to move our vision and mission forward." The leader needs to clearly communicate that and invite others to participate. Moral discourse is a method to facilitate that process as it contributes to an organizational climate that affirms the free give and take of ideas.

(3) Moral discourse promotes an organizational culture of community. Accountability is measured not by rules and procedures, but by shared values that form an organizational culture of community. Transformational leaders take the risk of creating open spaces for sharing information and asking value-laden questions. Their aim is not simply to foster participative management, but to nurture the development of empowered and self-directed teams who own the company mission. These leaders know that their success is dependent on the success of those who work with them. Through appropriate venues for moral talk, they strive to get "buy-in" by shaping a common ground of shared values on which they can build an organizational culture of openness and participation. As shared values emerge, the organization identifies the common ground that unites the mission, work and commitment among team players. The workplace becomes a place for human and moral development as individuals grow in all dimensions of their lives -- professionally, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. The workplace becomes a new context for life-giving relationships that can fill the void caused by the breakdown of natural communities in other sectors of the culture (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). It becomes a community itself . Such organizations grow toward becoming meaningful human communities because they are grounded in honest and trusting human relationships. This task of trust building is key. It lies at the heart of the agenda of the transformational leader, as Patricia underscored.

> We've done a lot of work in developing trust, and I think that's at the core of this. ...And it takes some work to get to that. ... there's a group dynamic and it has to become part of the culture of the group. I spend more time building that culture than I do making administrative decisions.

The effect demonstrates a clear communitarian context where the moral discourse can flourish. Community becomes the venue par excellence for moral conversation. This culture of community can be defined by two characteristics. First, it is a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals. Secondly, it is a measure of commitment to a core of shared values, norms, meanings, history and identity (Etzioni, 1999b). These characteristics define the organizational culture. A culture of community empowers all employees to share in mutual accountability to represent the values of the organization. The transformational leader, in turn, knows that she or he is accountable to one's colleagues to do the same. Herb commented on this sense of mutual accountability born of the culture of community.

> I feel responsible. I speak for every single one of them. If Jackie [the receptionist] makes a statement for this firm, it means one thing. If I make a statement for this firm, its meaning is entirely different. And I think that she recognizes her role, and I have to recognize my role. She is our front door to you when you came up front ... and she's representing Herb. And when I go out in front and speak for the firm in public, everybody in here wants to be proud of what I said. We were in the paper on Sunday, and had a social gathering later that day, and everybody came up to me and they said they loved the quotes I said in the paper. They look to me to say the right things when I need to say it, to represent all of our values.

(4) Moral discourse moves organizations to becoming moral communities. A workplace community that regularly engages in moral talk moves toward becoming a moral community. A moral community is a collection of participants bound by normative principles to which all subscribe and through which they are all linked because they have shared in their development (Moon, 1995). There is at some level a congruence between personal values and corporate values, and those shared values become the basis of an organization's identify and culture. In this sense, the organization has character and integrity just as individuals do, and that sets in motion an atmosphere that shapes its moral tone (Selznick, 1957). Though people may not really know each other personally in organizations, they are bound up with their mutual well being as a whole. In

this sense, they become moral communities and function as moral agents (Brown, 1990; McCoy, 1985). A moral community requires common faith in a covenant of reason (Selznick, 1992), something akin to Dewey's method of active intelligence. It presumes a commitment to shared discovery and rational inquiry as participants learn through experience what is good to have and right to do. It is the substance of moral talk and reflective dialogue. The process is ongoing as knowledge enfolds, akin to Bohm's (1996) image of an evolving stream of meaning. Knowledge, then, is not objective truth, but shared meaning.

The process culminates in the construction of moral authority within the community (Sergiovanni, 1996). That authority becomes the basis of what people do and the decisions they make. It comes about through the development of shared agreements and compacts that bring participants together in a shared followership. It allows organizations to function as a covenant community that speaks with a moral voice. It cuts through rules, policies, visions, mission statements, and value statements as it is planted in the heart rather than written in stone. That moral voice is the "secret that accounts for the power" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 59) of the community culture as it lays claims upon its members. Such communities are "the most important sustaining source of moral voices other than the inner self" (Etzioni, 1993, p. 31).

This moral voice of a sustaining moral community liberates the self from the narrow confines of personal conscience. It creates, for David, the school principal, a context for the "process of struggling with what's important, and struggling with our beliefs, and struggling with our values." Through that process, "some transformation takes place for them and for me." The whole enterprise strikes to the heart of leadership, as Joe reflected on his own experience.

> So I think the job of a leader is to enable and empower that ... And I think you do that mostly by listening, and getting people together in communities where they can get close enough. ... When that happens, then they hear this common

ground, and the diversity gets over being scary, and then it's like a good marriage ... where you think, "Thank God, there's somebody else that fills me out. I don't have to carry the whole load!" ... I mean, in a good community, that's what happens.

(5) The quality of the discourse varies across sectors, structures, and situations. This study involved participants across a wide range of organizational sectors. The data, though not conclusive, suggests that leaders in educational, philanthropic, human service, and religious organizations are more likely to operate within organizational cultures that promote moral discourse than are organizations within private industry, government and public agencies. Social sector workplaces, sometimes referred to as the "third sector," are more likely to provide greater opportunity for their members to talk values. They are the "gemeinschaft enterprises" that seem particularly equipped to emulate moral communities (Sergiovanni, 1996). This third sector is partially funded by the public and private sectors and interfaces between the two. It is largely comprised of non-profit organizations driven by citizen volunteers who devote considerable time to them (Drucker, 1994). Social sector groups often use qualitative modes of decisionmaking and evaluation and operate more regularly in the context of values and human social relations. They seem to practice moral discourse of some type or another as part of their normal mode of operation. As one participant said, "we have the right people, with the right attitude ... where we want to do these things and we have the resources to do it."

But this should not imply that leaders from private industry and government agencies do not practice moral discourse. Clearly, leaders within those sectors who participated in this study do so. I am simply suggesting that it is a matter of degree. There seem to be more constraints that impede the discourse within private industry and government agencies. A curious fact of this study relates to this conjecture. Though candidates from private industry constituted the single largest pool of nominees for the

study, the response rate in that sector was the lowest of the nine groupings (see Figure 2 and Figure 3, p. 102). Whether that was due to time constraints on those leaders in private industry or disinterest in the subject of inquiry cannot be determined. But it does suggest an avenue for future research.

Other factors contribute to that speculation. Four of the five participants who were in private industry held leadership positions in public relations and community relations. It was they who spoke of "competing missions" that sometimes make moral discourse difficult in their organizations. Their job descriptions placed high emphasis on inter-personal relations because they had to represent their organizations before the community. For that reason, they engage a wider environment and participate in a wider field of values perspectives than is generally practiced within the organizations in which they function. Given the fact that participants were screened on the basis of leadership style and communitarian orientation, it was not surprising that these were the private industry leader persons who were nominated, volunteered, and subsequently selected to participate. But the point is, due to the nature of their specific jobs, they may not be representative of the private sector when it comes to that sector's proclivity to practice values talk. As individuals, they may practice it, but their companies may not.

Organizational structure seems to influence capacity for moral discourse as well. Public sector groups are more bureaucratic and less likely to utilize modes of participative management, and so have less opportunity for members to engage in conversation about values. Political and legal constraints may prevent leaders in public service from expressing what they believe and value. Often, leaders in government or military service are prohibited by law from expression their beliefs for fear that it would expose a prejudicial political disposition that might compromise their official duties. On that very point, at least three public officials who were nominated to participate in this study declined to do so by citing that very problem.

To the extent that an organization's structure is large, vertical and hierarchical, it seems to be less likely to create the venues that make moral discourse happen. Conversely, smaller, horizontal, or flat structures are more likely to be democratized workplaces that enable discourse more effectively (Warren, 1995). This relates somewhat to the earlier point regarding power. When positional power is amassed in hierarchical systems, it deters moral discourse. It is more probable in flatter organizations where power is distributed throughout the organization.

Finally, an organization's disposition to the practice of moral discourse may be influenced by changing situational capacity. Organizations, like individuals, will likely have varying capacity to engage in the conversation. Thus, the leader may employ her or his discourse style in ways similar to the rubrics of situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Not all organizational cultures are "able and willing." For moral discourse to be operative, it requires a disposition and skill level on the part of both leader and collaborators, as well as a venue where the discourse can flourish. Leaders, their collaborators, and their organizational culture may be more or less so disposed. This comparison with situational leadership theory would suggest that leaders are more likely to be direct in their discourse style if they engage groups driven with a high task orientation but having low levels of inter-personal relationships. Alternately, those same leaders may be more likely to use an indirect style if they are operating within groups that demonstrate a low task factor, but have a high degree of relationships. This latter situation may be comparable to moral discourse within an intentional event. Further exploration of these parallels with situational leadership theory is beyond the scope of this immediate study but may be subject for future inquiry.

<u>Implications for Business Ethics</u>

The practice of moral discourse provides a means for organizations to negotiate the gap between the realms of business and ethics. Businesses that commit to ongoing

processes of ethical reflection in forums of moral discourse take the necessary steps to bridge the chasm between the two realms. One realm operates in categories of hard measurable facts, market studies, production costs, stock value, profit and loss statements, and in other means of quantitative measures. But the realm of ethics engages more qualitative criteria including meaning, significance, purpose and values (Gini, 1999). Processes of ethical reflection and moral conversation challenge organizations to ask the hard questions and to distinguish between the good life and the material goods of life. To do that, organizations and their leaders need to engage the discourse regularly and consistently, and more than just "in moments of desperation or disaster" (Gini, p. 32). The following implications, drawn from the data, speak to ways in which transformational leaders' practice of moral discourse can help close the gap.

(1) Moral discourse stretches the rubrics of business ethics beyond professional ethics. Typically, businesses view ethics solely in terms of individual professional ethics put forth in codes of conduct and other forms of moralism shaped by legal proceduralism. Anything goes, except that which breaks the rules, is strictly forbidden, or illegal. The ethical process all too often is in the charge of attorneys instead of transformational leaders. Too often, the matter of business ethics is focused on avoiding pathology, with a myopic concern for not doing the bad thing. Instead, it needs to address how to do the good thing. Thus, leadership ethics is far more than professional ethics singularly focused on individual character, personal integrity, and compliance with the law. It needs to call the whole organization to wider accountability on a host of issues that impact the way the organization does business. Leaders who regularly engage their constituents in forums of moral conversation have occasion to put forth that wider ethical frame. They do it by calling others to engage in moral talk that considers the larger context of the organization's culture and in ways that call others to full participation in collaborative modes of decisionmaking.

(2) <u>Moral discourse seeks congruence between personal and corporate values.</u>
Transformational leaders have a keen sense of their own values and personal life
mission, and seek to integrate those values in the context of their organization's ethical
life. They know what is important in their lives and they set their priorities accordingly.
Their workplace values need to be properly aligned with personal values. They invite
others to engage in similar reflectivity.

Conflicts between one's personal values and the values of the workplace likely
surface concerns that are appropriate issues around which discourse might emerge. The
fruit of that conversation has an effect on the individual participants as well as the way
the organization does business. Change is stimulated as a result of that process.
Debbie's conscience was disturbed when her job at City Hall caused a conflict between
what she was told to do and what she believed was the right thing to do. Had she
chosen to speak out, the conflict may have precipitated a meaningful and fruitful values
conversation within the organization, perhaps paving the way to more ethical practice.
When values congruity cannot be resolved, transformational leaders are likely to "switch
boats" as they seek out alternate organizational systems where their values are better
aligned with the values of the organizational culture.

Herb described a time when he engaged his colleagues in a conversation about
the company's values. He talked of his own struggle to reconcile what he perceived to be
a growing chasm between his own values and the values of his peers that increasingly
influenced the values of the company. He had been with the company for 27 years, and
served as president for the last fifteen. One day he dropped the question, " Let's talk
about why we work here, and what we want to accomplish, and how does it make you
feel as a professional?" Herb found that his colleagues were driven primarily by motives
of money and recognition. To the contrary, he told them of his value, as an architect, "to
make the city a better place." In the end, he came to recognize the inherent conflict.

"Guys, we're talking two spectrums, " he said. "I feel that getting involved and giving back to this community is an important value for me." The following Monday morning, Herb walked into his office and announced that he would be leaving the company. As president, he could have fired his colleagues, but he chose not to, out of concern for their families. Instead, he had this to say to them:

> Until you walk your values, are they truly your values. ...I think maybe it's a time in my life I need to go, and just take a look at my values, and see if I could do something totally around my values. I am leaving for one reason, and one reason only, and it's my values. And it doesn't make them right, and it doesn't make yours wrong. ... As far as I am concerned, I hope you guys continue on, and I'm just going to go over here and try to do something different.

For similar reasons, Sarah switched her position from the school district to the university. Both Sarah and Herb were searching for resonating communities to provide the moral voice that could amplify their own inner voices. They hungered for shared discourse with others who strive to work out the deeper meanings about life's purposefulness. Such leaders intuitively know that values discourse will be enhanced when they are in a resonating environment that gives legitimacy to their personal values. Only then can they act on their passions and deepest aspirations. When that happens, their work becomes transforming of them and others. But none of that can happen without the discourse that brings that awareness to consciousness.

(3) The moral discourse addresses ends as well as means. All too often, moral talk is used to justify actions done in the past rather than as a basis for choice and making decisions that impact the future (Bird et al., 1989). When it does so, moral talk is used in self serving ways that maintain systems under the teflon coating of protocol, law, rules, and ethical codes. Such discourse lacks the genuine dialogue that moves organizations toward change. Bird et al. conclude that such talk often takes the form of moral exhortations, imperatives and condemnations that either blame or praise others, express frustration over the "spilt milk" of prior decisions, or justify predisposed ends. They

suggest that more productive uses of moral discourse will engage problem solving that considers, advocates, defends or critiques the moral appropriateness of pending decisions. But these forms of discourse are far less prevalent . Leaders rarely use moral talk publicly within their organizations to advocate or criticize particular policies (Bird et al., 1989, p. 86).

Rost (1991, 1993, 1995) underscores this fact that few leaders engage the conversation in ways that address ends. All too often, leaders limit the discourse to the immediacy and relevancy of proposed means that have predisposed ends and purposes beyond question. But the conversation must be end driven. The rubrics of transformational leadership require that participants in the conversation intend or aim toward some value-laden end that is perceived as the good and can serve as a stimulant to change within the organization. But those ends themselves need to be continually re-evaluated as they change over time. The consequentialist orientation of this approach to discourse ethics is evident. The conversation is not so concerned with the "right thing to do" which appeals to a Kantian, cognitive, formalist and rational notion of duty, obligation and the deontological "ought." Rather, the discourse addresses the question of the "good thing to do," and thus appeals to an evaluative ethics this is concerned with consequences of the pending action on the general welfare of others. Like Dewey's "ends in view," the discourse is teleological in light of purposes and consequences. Ends are not absolute, fixed or written in stone -- hence, the need to keep the conversation going.

Habermas' criteria for ideal speech and open space emerge as appropriate standards for evaluating how well leaders can shape their organizations into both learning communities and moral communities that asses what is the "good thing to do." All institutions can become learning communities, but while they may be educative in the sense described by Senge (1990), not all are true moral communities if they inhibit free

and uncoerced discourse regarding the evolving ends that the organization serves within the context of its social milieu.

(4) The moral discourse postures a method for groups to make moral decisions. Most of what has been written about leadership ethics, as well as the general history of western moral philosophy, has been written from the perspective of the individual. Kanungo and Mendonca (1996) argue that the literature on leadership, especially business leadership, has neglected ethical issues because it focuses on approaches and strategies that emphasize individualistic concerns. The authors call for an end to the traditional separation of personal and public morality. The data of this study suggests ways to liberate the word "moral" from the monolithic and often oppressive domain of individual conscience, moral character, personal integrity, and other individual approaches to character ethics. What we sorely lack in the workplace, and in other kinds of group setting, are theoretical models to guide groups in making morally responsible decisions. We lack sufficient philosophical frames to engage that.

I am suggesting that if moral discourse is genuinely practiced according to the truest tenets of transformation leadership, it gets beyond those constraints of personal morality and individual ethics by offering a model for engaging the collective in processes of group moral deliberation. This factor bears heavy on the critical distinction between this study's approach to moral discourse and other leadership research that considers moral discourse as simply leaders' "moral talk" done in a monological fashion (Bird et al., 1989). It also moves beyond approaches in "ethical reflection" that are overly procedural, rational and argumentative, with minimum regard to transformational leadership and community building (Brown, 1990,1999).

Groups can exercise powerful influence in shaping people's moral reasoning (Dukerich et al., 1990; McGrath, 1984; Nichols & Day, 1982). Individuals change their moral reasoning through their interactions with others. From a communitarian

standpoint, Fishkin (1991) makes the same point, suggesting that citizens' positions on policy issues often change as a result of group deliberation. All this demonstrates the viability of dialogical moral discourse as a means to attain the aims of transformational leadership, where both leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. This research endeavor corroborates those studies, suggesting that organizations who seek to broaden their approach to business ethics might use more processes of group decisionmaking and less authoritarian models. That is, by providing individuals with an opportunity to consider problems that present moral dilemmas within a group context, individual and organizational learning occurs.

To the extent that moral discourse is a socially interactive process employing principles of transformational leadership, it is, of necessity, dialogical. It involves both, leaders and followers, in collaborative efforts in moral discernment, with the aim of intending real change. The dialogical nature of the process impinges on a critical component in Rost's (1995) call for a new paradigm of leadership ethics. That element calls for models that define not how individuals make moral decisions, but how groups make those decisions in collaboration with one another. That process of group decisionmaking and group ownership on the "good thing to do" is also critical to Sergiovanni's (1996) notion of a moral community speaking with a moral voice.

(5) Moral discourse considers the role of business as corporate citizen. The organization's culture, purpose, operations, products, services and modes of decision making need to come under greater moral scrutiny. Its operations cannot be determined solely by market factors. It needs to factor an economy of values that recognizes that the good life is not tantamount to the goods of life. Its objectives must go beyond corporate profit and shareholder gain. Quoting the legal scholar James Boyd White, Bellah et al. (1991, p. 102) press the point.

> To say that a corporation's only goal is to make money would be to define the business corporation ... as a kind of shark that lives off the community rather than as an important agency in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of our shared lives.

Transformation leaders in the private sector are attuned to this need and engage that conversation wherever and whenever they can. It motivates Herb to say, "We have been given a great opportunity in architecture to help elevate a society." The same perspective is evident in Fran's remarks about her own struggle to be "the social conscience" within her own organization.

> I have always felt that corporations and companies have a responsibility to the community where they exist ... and that they cannot just come into a community and take from that community ... and not consider themselves a part of that community and take an active role in the well-being of that community ... and to continue to bring that to the forefront of the organization.

Transformational leaders in the workplace provide ethical leadership in a way that broadens the domain of what has been traditionally understood as "corporate responsibility" and "community relations" They cast a wider net that engages a wider discourse in matters that may not be seen as immediately relevant to the mission and interests of the organization. But In doing so, they bring to the workplace discourse a concern for the well being of the surrounding local, regional, national and global community

Moral Discourse in Civil Society and Democracy

This section attempts to unpack themes that underscore the relationship between moral discourse and civic life in America. Although the data garnered in this area was thinner than that relating to the workplace, some interpretation is warranted. If transformational leaders can use moral discourse to effect change in organizational culture, to what extent can they employ similar dynamics in ways that address what Sandel (1996) calls the "formative challenge of democracy?" Can leaders' use of moral

discourse, whether it be in the workplace or the various intermediary associations that comprise civil society, nurture the formation of civic virtue that builds social capital and respect for the common public good sufficient to sustain the lifeblood of vibrant democracy?

I begin by addressing elements of civic life in America that make moral discourse difficult. I then go on to posture several implications that relate moral discourse to the practice of civic deliberation in democratic institutions. Consistent with the methodology of this study, those themes are interpreted within the context of transformational leadership theory, communitarian public philosophy, and discourse ethics.

Difficulties in Democratic Deliberation

Just as there are challenges to moral discourse unique to the workplace, civil society and democracy has its own set of problems that can make the conversation difficult. These challenges might be viewed as social and cultural impediments similar to those previously discussed in Chapter Four. But as they are more specific to the context of civil society and democracy, I consider them in this context. These difficulties pose stress points in the body politic that impinge on meaningful civic values talk. I identified five factors: (1) individualism; (2) the problem of pluralism and the common good; (3) proceduralism and the problem of false tolerance and diversity; (4) the privitization of politics; and (5) the dark side of politics.

(1) Individualism. Chief among the culprits is America's love affair with a Lockean individualism which militantly impedes the habits of the heart (Bellah et al., 1985). It is the nemesis of the common good, the Achilles heal of the American way. As a nation, the citizenry has shifted away from a public philosophy that was originally rooted in a communitarian civic republicanism and its concern for the common good, to one that is driven by individual rights. The result is the formation of a procedural republic that isolates moral discourse from the political processes of deliberation.

Individualism is on the ascent in movements for democracy across the world. Joe described it as "the elephant in the room" that stands for freedom and humanity's quest for "life, liberty and happiness." But its dark side is "unbridled selfishness of consumerism gone wild," as Joe went on to say. In its Lockean radicalism, it pays homage to the preeminence of individual rights, such that rights trump all else and individual liberty cannot be sacrificed, even to the pursuit of social justice (Dworkin, 1977). In so doing, the civic discourse is impoverished.

> The most distinctive features of our American rights dialect are its penchant for absolute, extravagant formulations, its excessive homage to individual independence and self-sufficiency, its habitual concentration on the individual and the state, at the expense of the intermediate groups of civil society, and its unapologetic insularity .... each of these traits makes it difficult to give voice to common sense or moral political discourse. (Glendon, 1991, p. 9)

In its extreme forms, this appeal to individual rights is framed in absolute property rights, a no holds bar on free speech, and an isolationism stripped of social responsibility. The idea of freedom and liberty, once rooted in civic virtue and the capacity to be a participant in political processes that shape the destiny of one's community, is supplanted with an idea of freedom based solely on individual choice. Freedom is a matter of guaranteeing that those individual rights are not restricted. Freedom is a "freedom from" that severs any and all constraints and social encumbrances that may in some way restrict the unfettered pursuit of one's own sense of the good life, with no regard for the common good. When married to political platforms, this notion of negative freedom can be the stuff of political ideology and self serving isolationism. In the end, one has no accountability to the social order. Rather, the table is turned the other way. The social order and government exist solely to guarantee the absoluteness of individual rights.

Elli's account of the school board meeting where "hate was just coming out of them" illustrates the dead-end discourse that results when deliberation deteriorates to a

shouting match pitting one right against another. Appeals to the right to free speech fall hollow and demean the intent of the Founding Fathers. On numerous instances, participants in this study cited how such individualism stands in sharp polarity with the values of community that are integral to the process of values talk. They seem to echo the communitarian call for a redemption of the word "individualism" in ways that better serve the aims of civic discourse.

A socially responsible approach, one that is reflective of transformational leadership, affirms the individual for the purpose of empowering the person to participate in the discourse of the community. Rather than an unencumbered or unbridled individualism, it is tethered to the great task of human development through history, and the fullest possible participation in the journey toward the Great Community (Dewey, 1984). Rather than individualism, David suggested an alternative word that may better describe the adventure -- <u>authenticity</u>. Curiously, it is an extension of <u>autonomy</u>, the word that Etzioni uses to capture a similar idea in his effort to balance the dialectic between rights and responsibility to the community (Etzioni, 1996). The sense is that we participate in the life of the community and its discourse as authentic persons, not simply atomistic individuals. We are, nonetheless, uniquely individuated, and self-directive actors, but we are informed, motivated, and morally inspired by the company of friends along the way. By doing so, we slay the dragon of Lockean individualism.

(2) <u>The Common Good and Pluralism</u>. One of the aims of transformational leadership is the attainment of shared meaning. From a communitarian perspective, it calls forth common ground in hopes of identifying the common good. In organizations, transformational leadership serves to focus collaboration around the common mission and purpose of the organization. It presumes the moral ascent of all parties to those aims. Yet, liberal democracy does not look near as kindly upon the common good. Given the primacy of individual rights, liberal political philosophy (Dworkin, 1977; Nozick, 1974;

Rawls, 1971) postures that the "good" is whatever people think is good for them. In such a view, government is held to the strictest standards of neutrality, and cannot impose the good. Given the unconstrained freedom of the individual, the good is only good in the eyes of the individual. There is no bona fide common good.

Besides the fear of losing one's individualism to the aims of the collective, the common good is devalued as a result of self interest. But a far more complex problem is the matter of pluralism and diversity in the society. Many would hold that such diversity underscores differences to such an extent that there is no longer a common fabric of values to identify as the common good. The result is a moral relativism inherent to a multicultural, pluralistic society, where the only good that can be honored is the mutual respect of one another's differences.

Several participants expressed concern that advocacy for the common good can be used to sidestep the recognition of diverse values and beliefs in the culture. The common good can be manipulated to deny that those differences exist. As Joe said,

> I am not sure that most people truly value diversity ... I think, actually, there is more of a tendency to assume there's a common good. But often the common good is what I believe in and what my folks believe.

David expressed similar concerns about majoritarianism, where the "majority good" is imposed on others as a coerced "common good." In either case, the common good is manipulated by a ruse to legitimate the predispositions and biases of those who have power.

But the inverse can happen as well, resulting in the posturing of a false idea of the common good under the well intentioned guise of a respect for diversity. That happens when diversity itself is held up as the only common good in a way that precludes the prospect for meaningful moral conversation that can better understand that diversity. As a result, citizens withdraw from the discourse in the name of respecting the common good of diversity, but without every talking about it. Fran illustrated the irony

and suggests how the common good can be false, if one is made to deny or sublimate one's own belief.

> When we talk about diversity and the common good, does it mean that in order to achieve the common good, that people give up who they are? For example, if I am a Christian, and I have certain beliefs, do I refrain from stating my beliefs in a public forum for fear that I will offend someone? Is that the common good? ... or is that applauding and appreciating diversity? ... or is that me, unwilling to come out and affirm what I am, what I believe in, for fear that I will offend others? ...I think people have moved to that, under the disguise of the common good ... and I have to give up who I am.

Fran's question gets to the distinction between true tolerance and false tolerance. In honoring the demands of tolerance and diversity, we are inclined to refrain from speaking our values, and in so doing, posture diversity itself as the common good. But, if one forfeits the articulation of one's beliefs or deter others from sharing their beliefs in the name of respecting that notion of the common good of diversity, one is honoring a false concept of the common good and a minimalist view of diversity. The non-speech action of withholding is based on a fear of offending others. But in the withholding, one is being less than honest, neither affirming one's own beliefs or the beliefs of the other. The discourse falls empty. The opportunity for the conversation is missed. It is antithetical to the characteristics of transformational leadership. The conclusion is that such cheap tolerance fosters a false notion of diversity manipulated to serve a false common good. There is an irony for sure. Rather than engage the discourse and find shared meaning through diverse ways of thinking, acting and believing, we avoid the discourse out of respect for an empty common good that yields no moral voice. It is a common good in absentia under a "veil of ignorance" that hides the void of meaning (Rawls, 1971).

(3) Proceduralism and the Problem of False Tolerance and False Diversity. A related difficulty posed by contemporary American civic life is the problem of proceduralism, where normative codes of conduct are defined by law without the benefit

of discourse and the civic disposition to sustain them. The procedural republic cannot secure the liberty it promises because it cannot inspire the moral and civic engagement that self government requires. A procedural republic that banishes moral argument from political discourse makes for an impoverished civic life (Sandel, 1996). The proceduralism lacks the moral voice and resolve of a validating moral community. At best, it attains a consensus of meaning that is perfunctory and routine, having limited capacity to sustain organizational resilience and solidarity to the group, particularly in times of crisis or change. It is simply an agreement to deal fairly and equally with each other according to prescribed protocols, regardless of how we conceive our ends. It cannot presume the moral ascent of those who are party to it.

Organizations are often only committed to diversity in the context of legal requirements. So-called diversity awareness is often codified in the protocols of politically correct quotas, rules and norms of behavior. There is no assurance that diversity awareness is genuinely a fabric of the consciousness of those who belong to the organization. Several participants shared stories that illustrated this. Ray suggested that much of what is put forth in the way of civil rights law and enforced diversity within companies are merely forms of tokenism that allow people to "avoid the issues" by "putting band aids on problems." He seems to be saying that such laws divert people from engaging the conversation. "It's not addressing diversity. And its not getting the gut issues out on the table." Again, it allows people to hide their values under a Ralwsian veil of ignorance and thus avoid facing the challenge of moral talk in an age of pluralism.

Yet, other participants, like Steve, pointed to the positive effects of the law and the social good advanced by progressive forms of liberal proceduralism. The law can call people to higher stages of awareness and responsibility, and can be a means of educating people about the values of tolerance and diversify within the society. Procedural tolerance can thus be viewed as a point on the way moving in the right

direction. As Steve put it, "Cheap tolerance is better than no tolerance. So we've made at least some human step along the way."

All this illustrates a dark side of tolerance and diversity that leads people to think that in order to honor diversity, they must withhold their own sentiments lest they offend others. In that regard, one's commitment to diversity and tolerance becomes the very impediment to the conversation.

This notion of "cheap tolerance" or politically correct tolerance was pervasive in the stories told by participants. Because individuals believe certain things or hold certain values, but hold back in expressing them, they enter the arena half-heartedly. In one focus group there was much reflection on the anxiety over the matter of interfaith prayer in public civic gatherings. Jacob, the minister, spoke of the conflict within himself.

> I have not said anything about how strongly I feel about being forced, into a box of diversity, forced to be sensitive [of others]... because my prayer life, even though on one end it is very public, it's also very personal ... and whenever I pray, it is within the context of my experience of my relationship with God ... and it's almost as if my spiritual values are being compromised as a result of praying ecumenical prayers.

Jacob is saying that he cannot be himself at the table of discourse. He went on to express his fear that others would not accept him, that they would think of him as a bigot. So he is half-hearted. How can the discourse be full hearted in ways that give each other the freedom and the open space to be themselves? It is evident that our preoccupation with racial and gender balance and our concerns for respecting others' beliefs can create a false sense of diversity that is empty and serves to undercut the quality of the discourse.

(4) The Privatization of Politics. As citizens distance themselves from the conversation, the political process loses its potency. It becomes an empty rubric of the procedural republic, void of moral voice. Values and beliefs are privatized, and so is much of the political process. The public sphere becomes a naked public square

(Neuhaus, 1984). The discourse becomes value-neutral. "You don't end up with any flesh on the bones," said Joe. In some cases, the discussion of values and beliefs is perceived as religious, "and that's taboo." As Peggy said, "you don't discuss politics and religion in public."

Yet, the roots of our deepest values and moral beliefs are often based in our religious convictions and our political dispositions. Yet, we are often taught as adults to avoid talking about those concerns in public spaces. Jacob described the "paradox."

> So much of our religious, spiritual, and philosophical values and principles define who we are. ... So, even though we say we are not talking about religion and politics, they imbue us with a sense of values against which we bounce decisions. ... To make decisions absent that influence, it's just impossible. In some way, shape, or form, whatever we espouse is predicated upon the seasoning of our convictions. ... Once you get to a certain point in any dialogue, in a discussion, we all begin to speak from who we are inside. And who we are inside is a product of our religious, spiritual, theological, social, political convictions ...that is where we take our positions.

Our convictions, whether they be religious or political, need to honor the demands of intellectual solidarity (Tracy, 1994). Our values and beliefs can engage the discourse, but in doing so, they must deal with the reality of post-modern moral relativism. The dialectic moves back and forth on a two-way street requiring intellectual solidarity of all who engage the conversation, with all operating within a community of freedom. All parties place their self understanding at risk. Each enters the discourse with an openness to both listen and speak, to learn from the experience, and if necessary, to change their position as a result of what they have learned. Hollenbach asks the distilling question that underscores the connection between the discourse, social change, and efforts to move beyond a false tolerance. "Is it too much to expect that the experience of transformation through engagement rather than tolerance could strengthen America's public philosophy?" (Douglass & Hollenbach, 1994, p. 336-337).

To do otherwise is to banish civic deliberation to a sterile, naked public square. If we defer to a politically correct notion of tolerance and diversity, and take that for the

common good, no value has been shared and reflected beyond the good of proceduralism. We are left holding an empty bag where meaningful values talk has fled the civic arena. Values have been privatized. If they are brought out into the public realm, and in the absence of the discourse, they are likely to come forth as ideology under the banner of special interest groups. As such, they deny accountability to the demands of intellectual solidarity. The result is political polarization. Thus, values are either privatized and removed altogether from the public sphere, or they are imposed in the civic area outside the bounds of discourse, and thus polarizing.

(5) The Dark Side of Politics. Participants described a number of other dynamics that when taken together convey a negative view of politics as it is experienced and practiced by those who hold public office. They talked of the problem of hidden agendas and special interest groups, the "arrogance of politics," and the co-optation of the political process by influential lobbyists, "experts," and party politics that "excludes you or traps you into so many views that you don't really share." "Our political systems," said Herb, "are examples of what's wrong with our country. ... It's either win or lose. You don't compromise. We've got people entrenched in ideologies and they can't see the good in the other."

Political power constrains the discourse. It controls both the electorate and politicians themselves. Those with the most power are the most cautious in their deliberation as they scramble to satisfy a self-serving electorate in the most politically expeditious manner. Though they have authority in their positional power, they often lack the personal power that can effectively motivate, inspire and persuade others on moral grounds. Reflecting on his own interactions with a host of political leaders in the context of his position as an executive of a large corporation, Ray described how the discourse is reduced to a "game."

> I think you do have to understand that it's a game, and when you go to Tallahassee or Washington, what you see may not be reality at all. What you see discussed and voted for on the floor of the House or Senate may have nothing to do with the issue at hand. You have to understand, that to survive in a political job or the world, decisions are made far, far ahead of time. And what you're seeing are things you have to go through in order to get to the end. And that can be perceived extremely negatively.

Thinking back to her experience on the school board, Elli talked of how political leaders must often withhold their beliefs and values, and in the process one can "lose yourself."

> You try to be so many things to so many people ... you get to a point where I don't even know what I believe about anything anymore, becaues there are so many people that are either telling you how you should believe ... or expecting you to do certain things.

Such leaders are left with little means to integrate the issues with their own values. Political solutions are postured in ways that have little basis in the shared meaning born of discourse among one's constituents. Rather, they are based on what is most politically expedient, with little if any congruity to one's personal values.

When asked if they would consider running for political office, most participants in this study were less than enamored. Most feared that they would have to cloak their values and be forced to wear a label. "I've had people come up and ask if I would consider running for public office. I wouldn't consider it!" said Lisa. "I think (political) leaders are withdrawn, and need valuable input , but they don't want to talk about their values or what they believe ... because of the public criticism."

In the arena of formal political deliberative bodies, the discourse often assumes a defensive posture that militantly works against anything remotely akin to an "ideal speech situation." The situation is compounded by the dark side of so-called sunshine laws that eclipse prospects for political leaders to build the trusting relationships that can spawn meaningful values talk. Such maneuvers of the procedural republic constrain the prospect for informal meetings that can serve as intentional and serendipitous events for

substantive moral conversation outside the bounds of situational events driven with official parliamentary protocols. Patricia talked of those difficulties in the context of her position on the school board.

> I shared with you the example of my fellow board member ... and we were polar opposites, or so we thought ... but what we were able to do ... and it's not easy to do this ... but the two of us, through trips to conferences and social situations that we agreed that we would have ... were able to have the time to really begin to know each other and to understand each other. Unfortunately, because the public officials are elected ... we can't bring the school board into this room, right here, and shut the door and have a session where we talked about communication and trust ...sunshine laws [prohibit that]. Now people don't seem to want to honor the need for the school board to have that opportunity. And I think the school board would welcome it.

Each of these difficulties pose obstacles to the practice of moral conversation. Whether it be exaggerated individualism, the bankruptcy of the common good, the protocols of proceduralism, a deference in the name of respect for difference, or a disdain for the political process or politicians, the consequence is an impoverished civic discourse. As many challenges as exist and as difficult as they are, the hope of transformational leadership is its capacity to surmount those difficulties by engaging the citizenry with the meaningful conversations that empower them as participants to speak and act with moral voice, and by doing so, advance the quality of democracy.

Implications for Civil Society and Democratic Deliberation

One of the objectives of this research is to investigate how leaders impact other people through kinds of moral conversations. The application at this juncture is to consider to what degree that process contributes to the education of an informed citizenry of engaged adults who take seriously their responsibility in a participatory democracy. The discourse has every relevance to the health of the public sphere. Sullivan defines the public sphere as:

> the legally secured sphere in which ideas and opinions circulate freely and in which individuals can develop through voluntary, non-coercive participation in purposes beyond the economic and private. The public sphere is the source of

conscience for the state. The viability of a democratic society is directly tied to the health of its public sphere. (Sullivan, 1995, p. 191)

The moral context is overt. When citizens have occasion to regularly share their beliefs in public forums of discourse, the practice of democracy is enriched. The data demonstrates several ways that happens. A cursory consideration of those dynamics follows.

(1) <u>The moral discourse reconstitutes the meaning of freedom</u>. Classic liberalism isolates freedom under the grip of individualism. But the experience of transformational leaders engaging others in values talk raises the moral ante of what it means to be a free person. It suggests that freedom is the capacity to participate with others in processes that advance social intelligence. Again, the American philosopher and educator, John Dewey, is on the mark.

> Liberty is that secure release and fulfillment of personal potentialities which take place only in rich and manifold association with others: the power to be an individualized self making a distinctive contribution and enjoying in its own way the fruits of association. ... Fraternity, liberty and equality isolated from communal life are hopeless abstractions. (Dewey, 1984, p. 329)

Sandel (1996) argues that this individualist notion of "freedom from" is a relatively recent development in American political theory, only taking hold in the mid 20th century. Another understanding of freedom, more in the tradition of communitarianism and civic republicanism, suggests that liberty requires sharing in self government and deliberating with fellow citizens about the common good that shapes the political community. To deliberate well about the common good requires more than the capacity to choose one's ends and to respect others' rights. It assumes an affiliation with the moral bond of a community whose future is at stake.

This freedom to enter the conversation poses a counterpoint to an understanding of the First Amendment. Too often, freedom of speech is couched in individualistic agendas with little appreciation for the freedom of speech that engages others in mutual

discourse. It is a monological speech that ignores the dialogical speech that is foundational to processes of civic deliberation. The latter views freedom as more than the right to have one's voice heard. It is also the right to hear the voices of others and to engage with others in forms of argumentation that can yield the shared meaning that shapes the community. Such discourse presumes that one has the freedom to risk being honest and speak from one's deepest values and dispositions. If we cannot be honest, we are not free. Such freedom moves beyond the safe zones of political correctness, while still honoring the differences of others. It engages the conversation through enduring processes of meaning making. Because the discourse is dialogical, one is obliged to give freedom to others so all parties can be forthcoming and true to themselves. Freedom is, as Jacob said, the capacity to be oneself. "It is a sharing of who I am with them." Besides being free to be oneself, one genuinely hears and respects the other and allows the discourse to move forward to unknown places, accepting the risk that one might be led to a different perspective and change what one believes to be true.

(2) The moral discourse postures a critical approach to justice. This implication flows directly from the former. When discourse is dialogical and critical, when it honors the criteria of discourse ethics and considers the needs of all, and when it is driven with a desire to seek the common good, it is oriented to the promotion of social justice. Those rubrics assume that participation is open to all whose interests are affected by the discourse. All are assured access to the table. Equality is not measured in quantifiable material goods and material well being, but in terms of a capacity to participate in the conversation (Ellison, Keifert, & Duty, 1997).

Moral discourse requires that participants in the conversation are able to converse together as equals, value each others' opinion, and give each other mutual respect. This notion of equal access has two distinct elements: (1) all parties that will be impacted by the resulting action must have entree to the conversation; (2) once

gathered, participants need to see each other as equals and value each others' perspectives. All have equal capacity to influence the course of the deliberation. In effect, power is distributed. Sarah said it succinctly. "People have to be able to sit together as equals ... and value each others opinion. I don't think you can really effectively enter into moral discourse unless people see each other truly as equals." Thus, from a communitarian perspective, freedom and justice are inextricably linked in the context of participation in the conversation. This broadens the notion of justice beyond its focus on individual rights as espoused by the liberal agenda. In the same way, it offers a corrective to an understanding of justice as legal retribution, a posture of the conservative agenda.

Justice based on participation assures that the community's interests of social justice are not lost to the interests of individual rights. Both are necessary. Brown highlights the synthesis.

> We must keep justice and rights together. When rights become separated from just forms of community, ... rights as protection against injustice become distorted into a tradition of rights for personal gain. The final purpose for individual rights is the development of a just community, just as the final purpose for justice is the development of a community that respects individual rights. (Brown, 1990, p. 126)

The dynamics of the conversation have the effect of equalizing power. Elli captured this sense as she reflected on her experience among a high-powered board of top level CEOs. "Its been fascinating to watch. ... You sort of lose the sense that these are powerful people." She seems to be saying that this notion of justice as participation has the effect of redistributing power in the group. Like transformational leadership, the sharing of values is multidirectional and without constraint, regardless of one's stature in the community.

(3) The discourse builds social capital and community. Throughout this study, it has been evident that the relationship between values talks and interpersonal

relationships is symbiotic. Each nurtures the other. Thus, moral discourse builds community, while community enhances the conversation. This is solace to communitarians' concern regarding the loss of social capital (Putnam, 1995, 2000). The discourse builds the bonds of solidarity, adding to the stock of social capital that sustains the civil society. The fruit is an invigorated civil society and body politic.

Joe spoke of the process in ways that underscored the role of Tocqueville's intermediary associations that are the building blocks of civil society. The experience of small groups and the discourse that happens in them is critical to the advancement of democracy. Jacob echoes similar themes that underscore the importance of grassroots movements that sustain society. He suggested that they are the germ of transformational leadership that can impact the larger society. He spoke of the need to view community leadership beyond the circle of elites who are highly visible and hold key positions in the private, public and social sectors. Instead, he describes community leadership as a tapestry of expanding, widening and overlapping circles of leaders engaged in public deliberation and moral conversation and related public action, each contributing to a vibrant participatory and democratic civil society.

Thus, the relationships that form in a particularized community engaged in a particularized discourse foreshadow an opening that can embrace the good of the larger society. There is some hope in the prospect of connecting across diverse communities, even though participants in the discourse of a given local community may not directly experience a relationship with the amorphous society-at-large. There is a capacity to project those attributes and experiences of solidarity with the larger whole and hold that up as an ideal. Sarah explained how her involvement in a number of civic groups influences the work she does and how it has an effect within the lifeworld of the university where she is employed. Several participants spoke of the dynamic as one of "bridge building" where connections bond citizens across diverse settings and weave the

fabric of the larger community. The result is a citizenry that feels responsible to one another and involved in one another's mutual well-being.

(4) Moral discourse honors pluralism with more genuine forms of tolerance and diversity. The plurality of moral values and conduct need not be an impediment to moral accord. Gouinlock (1986) argues that we can honor our differences while preserving a common ground of value. The benefits of cooperation and friendship far outweigh the consequences of distrust and antagonism. The efforts of moral talk can find sufficient levels of shared meaning to advance the good of all. There is no incompatibility here with pluralism and diversity. Transformational leadership and the practice of moral discourse embraces the diversity and take it to levels that proceduralism cannot. It is a manifestation of Dewey's social intelligence in action, as "moral pluralism becomes intelligence respectful of itself" (Gouinlock, 1986, p. 67).

The discourse points to a richer and more genuine understanding of tolerance and diversity. Tolerance and diversity are liberated in ways that stimulate the free exchange of ideas regardless of the differences among those ideas. Through mutual acceptance and respect, participants give one another the freedom to express their beliefs, without judgment on the moral rectitude of those beliefs. Participants hold each other accountable to intellectual solidarity in a community of freedom. True tolerance presumes that we trust the purposes and intentionality of the other. What matters is not only what is said or how it is said, but the intentionality of the speaker and the hearer. It is an engagement of mind and heart and is measured by the quality of the relationships among the participants. It presumes the good faith of all parties.

True tolerance is a posture of openness that broadens the awareness for all participants. Intentionality and sensitivity are reciprocal. The speaker must be sensitive to the difference in the other, while the other must trust the good intentions of the speaker. To the extent that each becomes more aware of this dialectic, the prospects for

meaning making are advanced. Herb described how he trusted Richard, a colleague, despite their differences. "There's nothing Richard could do or say that would offend me." The fears brought on by feelings of intimidation are displaced. True tolerance trusts that the other's intention is sincere, is not hurtful. It is a tolerance that gives legitimacy to the value of everyone's input, even if one doesn't agree with the other. As Sarah said, "I think that the attitude has to be such that you and I may not agree, but your opinion has value. ... We have to be willing to ... see things from the other person's point of view." It is a process of moving into another's space and really giving the other value by respecting the dignity of the other regardless of their actions or beliefs. There is something more here than is typically understood in the rubrics of political correctness. Jacob said it best in ways that contrast a cheap tolerance from a true tolerance.

> It's not so hard to tolerate. What's hard is to appreciate a value. Because toleration allows me to say who I am and to look at you and just say that you are there. But, when I have to move from my own concepts and thoughts and ideas into another's territory ...so that I can really give them value in my own life, ... that's what difficult for me.

This richer notion of tolerance is the path to a fuller appreciation and engagement of the diversity in a pluralistic democratic community. True diversity requires that speakers suspend judgment and that they be sufficiently secure to risk being honest. It is noncoercive and non judgmental. It legitimates the expression of values, beliefs and feelings free of the fears of intimidation. It "goes deep," as Cindy said, as it seeks meaning by integrating both facts and values through an openness to the novel, the alternative, and the insight born of true dialogue.

Carried out in this fashion, moral discourse breaks down the barriers that separates as it seeks an integrated community based not on race or gender or sex, but on the integration of ideas in search of the synthesis that can sustain a common ground of meaning. To that end, it calls forth integral thinking that is the harbinger of transformation. It is genuinely inclusive of the mind and heart of all players. The quality

of the dialogue is the litmus test of diversity in the truly pluralistic society. And that quality is contingent on the quality of the relationships among those who are engaged in the conversation. As the participants in this study stated repeatedly, relationships are everything. But, as Elli reminded those in her focus group, "It takes time, it takes energy, and there is risk involved."

(5) <u>Moral discourse calls forth the public common good</u>. As the discourse honors a commitment to true diversity and the fullest exchange of ideas, perceptions of a thicker meaning of the common good come into focus. A communitarian notion of the common good is not an aggregate of individual preferences. Unlike utilitarianism, it does not begin with individual preferences and then try to satisfy them. Rather, it seeks to cultivate among citizens the dispositions, attitudes and habits of the heart (Bellah et al., 1985) that nurture the civic virtue that is necessary to sustain the well being of all who share in the processes of self government.

To the extent that persons enter into moral communities, the rational claims of individual notions of the good are accountable to a covenant of reason freely entered into by those who by their participation share in the life of a moral commonwealth that strives to harmonize those diverse interests (Selznick, 1992). Thus, the quest for the common good takes place within and not against the experience of plurality. It honors and celebrates the difference. The challenge of doing moral discourse in a multicultural society is to engage the conversation while still honoring the differences, given the diversity of participants. As Cindy put it, "...to respect the differences ... but find that medium ground where we can accept and respect one another and still be different, and not allow anybody to move that difference." Following up on Cindy, Joe captured it in a pithy phrase, "Accept and respect, and not waste the difference."

This point of the common good is germane to the postmodern criticism of democracy. Postmodernism rejects the idea of a common good and any notion that

would suggest that democratic practice entails shared moral values. Instead, the radical postmodern view sees division and conflict as unavoidable. But even if we admit to the premise that there is no definitive public final good, I am suggesting that we nonetheless pursue that good in the discourse along the way. Without such hope for islands of shared meaning in the midst of the conversation, we have no recourse to co-existence. The alternative is chaos, anarchy, and tribal conflict, the reality of September 11th being a stark reminder.

There is some hope in the postmodern perspective of Mouffe regarding this elusive notion of the common good. He says, "the common good can never be actualized; it must remain as a kind of vanishing point to which we should constantly refer, but which cannot have real existence" (Mouffe, 1990, p. 63, cited by Tierney, 1989, p. 163). Yet, the common good is no less real than is the sunset on the distant horizon. It too is a vanishing point, and ever elusive. It can be captured on photograph, pointed too, gazed upon and prayed with. It speaks to and amplifies the voice of one's conscience, providing moral voice. It does not exist in fixed time and space, and is always beyond our grasp. It is as real as real can be. It gives context, providing reference for memory and the charting of one's direction. So too, it seems, is the common good.

The common good is the unum that squares with the pluribus. Without the common good, there is no basis for identification and solidarity within the community or the organization. The unity that forms around the common good is the flip side of diversity, and genuine moral discourse is the means of discovering it. To get to it presumes that we have attained some sense of shared meaning, and that presumes discourse of some sort. If that conversation is not going on, we are not likely to know what the common ground looks like. If as a society we tend to lose sight of the common good or doubt its existence, it is perhaps because we have avoided the conversation.

Chapter 6: CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a general summary of the research findings, followed by a reconsideration of the definition of moral discourse in light of those findings. It then revisits the challenge of transformational leadership vis-à-vis the practice of moral discourse, framing it in the context of critical leadership and Rost's call for a new paradigm of leadership ethics. The chapter concludes with considerations regarding the experience of the research focus groups, a reflection on the study's impact on the researcher himself, and recommendations for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to better understand how leaders engage their constituents in moral conversation and how that process shapes organizational culture. The study also considered the implications of that process for the advancement of democracy. The research employed a qualitative methodology using focus groups and interviews. Participants in the study included 25 leaders screened and recruited across diverse organizational sectors.

The research was driven by the following primary question: How do transformational leaders understand their experience of moral conversation? Data was interpreted in two ways. The results of the first is the focus of Chapter Four. It yielded a thickly descriptive interpretation of the phenomenon of moral discourse, using the constant comparative method of data analysis. The second is the focus of Chapter Five, and presents a more interpretive analysis done through lenses of the primary literature on leadership, communitarian political theory and discourse ethics. Secondary contexts included the literature drawn from areas of moral development and civic education.

The literature on transformational leadership underscores the leader's role as moral agent. This study demonstrated that the way leaders engage their constituents in moral talk is critical to the practice of transformational leadership. Though transformational leadership involves leader-persons, the heart of its practice is the relationship between leaders and their followers and the dialogue that goes on between them. When viewed as a fundamentally dialogical communicative process, moral discourse provides a helpful way to understand the dynamics of transformational leadership.

The findings of this study demonstrate that moral discourse is a complex communication phenomenon. Analysis identified several major categories and constructs that serve to better the understanding of what moral discourse is and how it functions. Moral discourse first presumes the context of a venue that frames the particularity of the conversation, giving it place and context. The venue is defined by the arena, the temporal event, the issue and the core values that motivate the speakers.

The discourse is subject to a host of individual, social, cultural, and communication dynamics that can either impede the conversation or stimulate it. Individual impediments include lack of efficacy, false assumptions, fears, moral absolutism and self doubt. Other impediments are more social or cultural and include, among others, the dominant cultural discourse, the loss of social capital and natural communities, cultural pluralism, and the dualism between facts and values that often discounts the relevancy of the latter within the public discourse. But positive individual dynamics can motivate one's participation in the discourse. They include one's passion and sense of self mastery, risk capacity, and past formative experience. Other stimulants center on the communication process itself. The conversation is enhanced when it is convened in safe places that evoke openness and promote shared meaning, empathic listening and trusting relationships.

Further analysis demonstrated a typology of moral discourse based on speech action, style and function. Positive speech actions are initiation, intervention and response, while negative actions are withdrawal from the conversation, withholding, and abdication. When they employ positive speech actions, leaders demonstrate a speech style that moves along a continuum between direct and indirect styles of speech. Direct styles tend to be more transactional, while indirect styles seems better suited to the ends of transformational leadership. Speech actions can be further delineated by the functions they serve. Those functions include, among others, teaching, problem solving, correcting, advocating, questioning, disclosing and validating.

Effective transformational leaders also demonstrate a rich variety of specific internal and external practices that enhance their ability to stimulate genuine dialogical moral discourse. Internal practices advance the leader's personal growth and moral development. Among them are the leader's own habits of self reflectivity, a willingness to re-evaluate one's own beliefs and values, a capacity to think integrally and dualistically, and an ongoing discipline to nurture a sense of one's own moral vision. External leader practices are move overt and stimulate the conversation among others. These include modeling positive communication dynamics, proactively creating venues for the discourse, knowing how to use moral talk strategically, appealing to ideals of service and social justice, and using more subtle ways to communicate values through symbol, ritual, and play.

The study also considered more specific application of leaders' practice of moral discourse in the public arenas of the workplace and civil society. In the context of the workplace, additional challenges to the discourse were identified. Organizational culture and mission can serve to enhance the conversation or thwart it. Other factors include the role of power, concerns for productivity, and the protocol of rules, policies and procedures. But when it is practiced effectively, moral discourse can impact

organizations in significant ways. It can advance organizational learning and is at the heart of shaping an organization's guiding vision and mission. When regularly practiced, it promotes an organizational culture of community grounded in the solidarity of relationships where people genuinely care about one another and are involved in one another's mutual well being. The discourse gives moral voice as the organization bonds together into a moral community. The study also demonstrated that the quality of the discourse can vary across the private, public and social sectors. The variance is also influenced by organizational structure and situational capacity.

Other implications in the workplace exhibited means in which the moral discourse broadens the scope of business ethics beyond matters of professional ethics. It engages participants in ways that seek congruence between personal values and corporate values. It goes beyond means and addresses the ends that drive the organization. Perhaps most significantly, moral discourse postures the means for groups to make moral decisions collectively. The discourse is broadened yet in other ways as organizations can consider their role as corporate citizens within the larger national and global community.

When considering moral discourse within the context of civil society, still other obstacles present themselves. They include individualism, cultural pluralism, the problem of the common good, the privatization of the political process, and a pervasive negative view of politics that exists among many. But the study also gave evidence to how the practice of moral discourse can nurture the formation of civic virtue and contribute to a more robust participatory democracy. It does that by broadening conceptions of freedom and justice in ways that give primacy to the act of participation. Other means include the building of social capital and the surfacing of shared meaning that can recapture the legitimacy of the public common good. But perhaps more than anything, genuine moral discourse provides a means to posture a richer understanding

of tolerance and diversity that truly recognizes and values differences as they unfold in the communities of meaningful discourse.

All this has great significance for the ongoing experiment of democracy. Moral discourse provides a context to rediscover the moral language that can engage the diversity of participants in the public square of not only the national community, but the international community as well. This study suggests that transformational leaders are at the heart of that enterprise as they engage their constituents in moral conversation within the organizations in which they function, whether that be the workplace or civil society. To the degree they do that, their efforts hold promise of opening minds and advancing the human enterprise of the good society.

Liberating "Moral" in the Moral Discourse

At the end of this endeavor, it is appropriate or revisit my earlier attempt at defining the term moral discourse. From the beginning stages of this project, I have encountered some difficulty with the term, largely due to the baggage associated with the word "moral." As one participant described it, "Moral is a scary word." Several misconceptions abound.

Morals are often looked upon as individual beliefs, and often perceived as personal and private matters having little or no relevancy to the public order. To talk about them in a public setting is deemed inappropriate. The very idea of public moral discourse can rub the wrong way. Others look askance on moral discourse, as it conjures up images of self righteous ideologues, rigid and fixated in what they believe, exhorting others to adopt their absolutist point of view. As another participant stated, "if you ask me to come for a moral conversation, I am scared as hell. I don't want to go because my first question is "whose morality?" In such a purview, moral leadership is intimidating, as moral leaders are perceived as moralizing, hegemonous and

authoritarian. Meaningful discourse in such instances would appear to be unlikely. Thus, the notion of <u>public</u> moral discourse is something of a double oxymoron: (1) morals are private matters and not appropriate to bring to the public square; and (2) one's morals are unchanging individual principles, beliefs and values and are not subject to critique by others in group settings. Therefore, there is nothing to talk about and no place to engage the conversation, albeit, no discourse. It is evident that such confusion only reinforces the phenomenon of an empty and naked public square as discussed earlier.

Still others are confused or put off by the religious overtones of the word <u>moral</u>, suggesting that moral discourse evokes talk of religious values, beliefs and dogma. Out of respect for religious differences and the tolerance of others' beliefs, some view moral discourse as a discussion of morality that impinges on those beliefs. Others associate more negative meanings in the religious context, inferring that moral discourse is a context for religious proselytizing that reflects a crusader mentality and religious fundamentalism.

Another perspective hears the word moral and presumes that it plays to the tune of a conservative, traditional, "old-fashioned" and bygone day, not relevant to the postmodern reality. Moral discourse might simply be a nostalgic look to the past where values may have been imposed through processes of socialization. Such views run counter to those who believe that the development of one's values is at the heart of what it means to be an authentic and self actualized person. Values education and moral education are perceived as subtle attempts at manipulation and mind control. Accordingly, some have misgivings about recent efforts to inject "character education" into schools, suggesting that it might be a last vestige of a displaced power from a bygone monoculture trying to reassert itself. In that context, values education and character education serve the oppressive socialization interests of the dominant culture.

Thus, moral discourse can be viewed as a method of moral education, and as such, carries the same baggage as moral education. Oser (1986) cites several reasons for skepticism about moral education. It implies restrictions on freedom, an appeal to tradition, puritanical education and indoctrination. It conjures up images of moral education perceived as "inculcation." Many educators are ill disposed to it. Moral discourse implies moral education and the latter is viewed as a dangerous landscape, much of it a minefield situated in a territory "where sages fear to tread" (Purpel, 1975, p. 659, cited by Oser, 1986, p. 935).

But understandings of morality as postured in values education and character ethics presume a highly individualistic context. A moral person is seen as one made of moral fiber and possessing personal integrity. A moral person is a person self assured, willing to stand the ground of one's convictions. This study has already demonstrated how those very characteristics, if not tempered, can potentially be antithetical to the dynamics of moral discourse. What seems to be missing in so many approaches to values education and programs of character development is a perspective of morality that is dialogical and relational. Morality has far broader meanings than values that build personal character. Rest postures the following notions of morality, all of which are relational and most of which involve communication: (1) behavior that helps another human being; (2) behavior in conformity with social norms; (3) the internalization of social norms; (4) the arousal of empathy or guilt, or both; (5) reasoning about justice; (6) putting another's interests ahead of one's own (Rest, 1983, p. 556).

Thus, the word moral is in need of being liberated from the private realm. Morality presumes a social context that is, at its core, relational and dialogical. In this context, moral discourse is at the very center of morality. But given this shift in meaning, one is faced with yet another factor that compounds the problem. It is at the very heart of the postmodern challenge faced by morality. It is the problem of lost language to do the

moral talk (Bellah et al., 1991; Carter, 1993; MacIntyre, 1984). That loss is contemporaneous with the loss of the moral communities with which to engage the conversation. I am suggesting that the dynamics of transformational leadership speak to that challenge and its processes are central to the restoration of moral language and moral communities in the postmodern culture.

This study considered transformational leadership within the moral framework of a liberal communitarian social ethic. By posturing a communitarian liberal approach to the problem of the good in a pluralistic society, this study assumed the tradition of a Deweyian naturalistic approach to morality. Morality is fundamentally a social and communicative action in the world and as such, is socially constructed. One cannot act morally in solitude on a desert island, and one cannot act morally on the basis of moral theory removed from history, context and life experience. This approach postures that the aims of moral discourse transcend individual participants, whether they be leaders or followers, and yet champions the liberal ideals of individual personal growth and human authenticity. The conversation takes place in the context of moral communities where the purpose is to "encourage uncoerced communication and apply intelligence and experimentation to problems of collective common life" (Selznick, 1992, p. xii). The fruit of the discourse is meaning that is always tenuous, relational and contextual. It is never absolute and ideological. It is the stream of human consciousness-in-the-making through the movement of history, unfolding, and like the universe, continually expanding.

At the crux of moral discourse is the prospect of collective moral decision making. The data of this study suggests certain criteria that frame the processes necessary for such a collective approach. These criteria are ideal, perhaps in a sense comparable to Habermas' "ideal speech situation." Nonetheless, they may provide some measure of standard to aim toward. To some extent, they complement Oser's (1986) criteria for moral discourse, but frame it in categories more relevant to transformational

leadership in an age of postmodernism. A beginning list of such criteria might include the following elements:

(1) Participants need to be genuinely secure in what they believe so that they can be open to empathic listening of others. That is, they are able to look past the impediment of their own point of view, even their own belief systems.

(2) The arena of discourse is particular to issues and temporal events. It is a moment in time, that requires a decision "for now." There is an element of relevancy to the immediate moment. Context is everything for meaning that is particularized. It is so very much a qualitative enterprise. Decision making is done in light of the concreteness of historical situations and the particularity of circumstance. As such, it does not draw from apriori fixed moral positions.

(3) It is informed by Critical Theory and the concerns for addressing need, justice, the sharing of power, and efforts that give voice to the voiceless by providing them access to the table of discourse whenever possible.

(4) The participants in the conversation suspend judgment, recognize the multiplicity of voices, and posture a genuine "ethic of care" that complements an "ethic of principle" (Gilligan, 1982).

(5) The enterprise makes possible the emergence of the novel and the unimagined alternative, assuring that the process is not pre-determined, contrived or manipulated.

(6) The decision evokes some form of action in the form of intended change.

(7) The process of moral discourse presumes an open space that is accommodating to frank, honest discourse in a conversational mode of "give and take." It strives toward consensus, but may not get there. It is an imperfect and inherently messy business.

(8) The context of values is pre-eminent in the discourse. It moves beyond the fact/value split by giving legitimacy to affective modes of knowledge and speech and interfaces that knowledge base with more factual or cognitive modes of knowledge. Without that value base, it cannot be moral discourse.

I return to my earlier definition. Moral Discourse is an attempt to develop shared meaning through a socially interactive process that engages participants in forms of public conversation that evoke and legitimate the inclusion of "values talk." Moral discourse interplays both facts and values, drawing upon beliefs, dispositions and intuitions in an effort to surface shared meaning that can shape consensus regarding the right thing to do in a given situation. All this has to do with meaning making. Interpretation is the heart of what it means to be human. It is the center of the human experience. "To understand is to act reflectively, to decide deliberatively, to understand intelligently, to experience fully. Whether we know it or not, to be human is to be a skilled interpreter" (Tracy, 1987, p. 9). Thus, the practice of dialogical moral discourse is at the heart of the human endeavor. To be fully alive is to engage reflectively with others in the process of mutual meaning making. So framed, moral discourse is the path to becoming a more fully self actualized human person.

Revisiting Rost's New Paradigm for Transformational Leadership Ethics

This research underscores the relationship between transformational leadership and moral leadership. To the extent that transformational leadership is an influence relationship that engages leaders and their constituents in processes that raise both to higher levels of moral motivation, this research suggests that the practice of moral discourse lies at the heart of that practice. The findings of this study demonstrate that transformational leadership is about the enterprise of constructing communities of moral conversation that have the potential to be the impetus for change within the

organizations and institutions in which they function. The moral discourse within those communities is the vehicle that brings forth the shared meaning that motivates the intention for such change.

If transformational leadership is moral leadership that generates capacity for change through the practice of moral talk with others, then it is critical leadership. Because it engages participants in an evaluative assessment of both means and ends, it is fundamentally critical and contributes to the emancipation of people within organizations and society. To the extent that it does so, it advances democracy (Tierney, 1989). Thus, the great human work of democracy in history is itself a fruit of the moral discourse that leaders engender. The very locus of the critical nature of leadership is the act of transformational conversation. Transformational leaders bring forth that conversation and are transformational primarily in the context of the conversation. In the absence of the conversation, they are stifled. If there is no moral conversation, there is no transformational leadership. Transformational leaders may or may not hold positional power within organizations. Their agency is dependent on their capacity to participate with others in the meaningful values discourse that can occur at various levels of organizations and associations within civil society. Thus, the moral discourse is not marginal to the practice of transformational leadership. It is its very lifeblood.

This study provided but a small glimpse of the ways moral discourse works in the lives of a small group of diverse leaders. As a qualitative investigation with very limited scope and database, the results cannot be generalized to the larger population. Nonetheless, in the context of their particularity, the findings do suggest some applicability to the practice of leadership to the extent to which they are transferable and resonate with the experience of other leaders (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The findings also contribute to the continued expansion of transformational leadership theory. A major stimulant to this research was prompted by Rost's (1995) call

for a new paradigm for leadership ethics. He argues that the former post-industrial paradigm can no longer speak to the postmodern reality. It fails to do so because it is uncritical of ends, and postures an authoritarian model of leadership that destroys collaboration by wielding power. The new paradigm addresses the content of leadership by being critical of the ends that organizations and communities serve. In that pursuit, it honors the tenets of genuine transformational leadership that maintain collaboration in ways that are noncoercive while it calls forth multi-directional influence among all participants in ways that serve the common good of all those who share in its processes.

Rost sketches five loosely defined descriptors that frame his call for a new theory of leadership ethics. (1) It must be group oriented, that is, owned by the group and employing modes of group moral decisionmaking that are not based on individual morality. (2) The new theory must be process oriented, particular in its focus, and able to solve specific problems faced by organizations and communities. (3) The new paradigm must focus not on developing virtuous persons, but the development of virtuous organizations and communities. (4) The new theory must articulate a clear understanding of the common good. (5) The whole process must honor diversity by transcending gender, religion, race and other boundaries and yet advance some minimal level of universal values and principles.

Many of the implications regarding the practice of moral discourse as set forth in Chapter Five add some flesh to the bones of Rost's criteria. By way of summary and synthesis, the following propositions highlight the major themes of those implications and are germane to transformational leadership theory and a renewed approach to leadership ethics.

(1) Transformational leaders facilitate moral agency. Transformation leaders are moral agents not so much because they are moral persons, but because they are moral leaders in relationship with others. That is to say, they stimulate processes of moral

reflection among their constituents, and in ways that lead to action. Only in that capacity are they moral agents. One cannot "be" moral. One can only act morally with and among others. If leaders are moral, it is only because they are moral agents of change in collaboration with others.

(2) Transformational leadership is dialogical and dialectical. We generally expect leaders to be decisive. But such definitude often shuts down the conversation prematurely. Transformational leaders are dialogical, think integrally, and are able to hold together multiple realities in a state of equilibrium. They befriend ambiguity and the provisional nature of much decision making. Consequently, they handle change more effectively and can respond to moral dilemmas with innovation warranted by the particularity of circumstance.

(3) Transformational leadership builds moral communities. Transformational leaders proactively promote moral discourse by creating the venues for the moral conversation. They do it because they are attentive to the task of building organizations founded on the solidarity of relationships and the collective moral voice that gives identity and focus to the organization.

4) Transformational leadership can use discourse ethics as a method for group moral decisionmaking. Habermas' theory of communicative action speaks to the dynamics of transformational leadership that call for a means for groups to make moral decisions that are binding on the participants of the conversation. Like transformational leadership, discourse ethics is based on models of ethical reflection that affirm the need for mutuality, inclusivity, intellectual integrity and non-coercion. Discourse ethics provides a means for group moral decisionmaking.

(5) Transformational leadership advances the moral development of participants. Transformational leaders are committed to advancing the moral development of both,

themselves and others. The dialogue stimulates development of moral reasoning and the shift toward post-conventional stages of moral development.

(6) <u>Transformational leadership is critical leadership because it promotes moral discourse</u>. Genuine transformational moral discourse opens the conversation to address issues of ends and power. It is a practice in critical pedagogy that facilities consciousness raising, enables participants to better understand social relations within organizations and society, and empowers them to effect change.

(7) <u>Transformational leadership calls forth the common public good</u>. This theme runs through much of the study. To the extent that moral discourse is able to bring participants to a common ground of shared meaning, it is able to posture some basis for defining the common good that can sustain organizational and civil commitment to the general well being of others.

The Focus Groups as A Medium of Moral Discourse

Looking back upon the experience, it is evident that I, as researcher, facilitated among these leader-participants a moral discourse in itself. Through the use of focus groups and interviews, this research used conversation as the means for data collection. In this sense, values talk or moral conversation was both the object and means of this inquiry. Thus, the research was itself an experiment in moral discourse, and though not intended, it might be viewed as a form of action research to the extent that the focus groups and interviews emulated the experience of moral discourse. The process itself was an expression of the product.

It was evident that participants in the focus groups were empowered by reflecting on the moral context of their own leadership experience. They seemed to be stimulated as they found themselves affirming each other's capacity to be an agent of change. Though some may have been skeptical of the word moral early on, in time, they largely

befriended it and found in it a capacity to make meaning. Several described their experience in the focus groups as a learning event. They often remarked that they left the process renewed in their confidence as a leader and their responsibility to create venues for moral conversation in the various contexts of their organizational settings.

To some extent, the communication dynamics of the focus groups demonstrated the very dynamics of moral conversation as put forth in this study. The medium was the message. The process emulated the kinds of group moral decisionmaking that can come from such discourse, despite the diversity of values among the players. It was, in Steve's words, "a microcosm of what could happen if you turned us toward a real issue ... we could have been the leaders of the city, the state, the country or the world. And we would have been successful."

The Impact on the Researcher

I would be remiss if I failed to comment on the research impact on myself. It is evident my own "emancipatory interest" came into play as the study engaged my own commitment to values that promote social transformation and the advancement of democracy (Quantz, 1992, p. 473). Rather than bracketing those values, I strived to find means to appropriately engage the conversation myself with the participants, particularly in the intimacy of the individual interviews.

Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, I found myself becoming increasingly reflective on my own leadership experience. I was not the removed and distant observer, but one engaged as an active participant in the conversation. Meaning making flowed back and forth between participants and researcher. It was evident that the experience brought forth within me a participative mode of consciousness (Heshusius, 1994) as I found myself engaged in active narrative production through forms of mutual interaction that produced meaning (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

Recommendations for Future Research

The scope of this study has been much wider than I had anticipated. Much of the data point to concerns that warrant more intense research. In an effort to tame the data, there were intriguing elements left out or glossed over. These suggest opportunities for future research. Among them are the following.

Transformational leadership is a process that is not solely invested in individual leader-persons. Yet, this study singled out fairly high profile leaders within in the community. I have previously alluded to the prospect that lower level management persons and grassroots community leaders may actually be a more fertile context for the practice of moral discourse. Future studies might single out those kinds of persons and take them through similar research processes. The presumption is that moral discourse is going on at other levels of the organization and civil society.

The methodology of this study was influenced by the speculation that there is a positive correlation between transformational leadership style and communitarian political orientation. Yet, no studies have explored that relationship. The sole reason for posturing the connection between the two was based on the reasonable expectation that such a correlation exists and would be a helpful means to screen for a more informed group of participants who practice moral discourse more regularly than does the general population. That presumption suggested that this study could learn more about the practice of moral discourse by engaging those kind of persons. To the extent that future research can substantiate the correlation between transformational leadership and communitarian orientation, the validity of the data of this study can be enhanced.

In my methodology, I acknowledge the limitations inherent in drawing from only three focus groups, and suggest that further studies might engage a fuller range of focus groups subdivided into a series of break groups that are more homogeneous and reflective of leaders who share a common organization sector. I am mindful that this is a

counterpoint to my decision to purposefully not organize the focus groups according to homogeneous careers, as I did in the pilot focus group. I judged that greater diversity would give a greater breadth of data, which I believed it did. Nonetheless, future research might investigate differences among various organizational sectors.

Flowing from that, one of the implications of this study was the prospect that social sector organizations are more disposed to the practice of moral discourse. Sergiovanni (1996, p. 46) refers to such organizations as "gemeinschaft enterprises," suggesting that they hold the best prospect for the formation of moral communities in the workplace. This study tends to validate that assertion and suggests that additional studies focus on that population. Likewise, related studies might focus on private industry and the public sector, in efforts to better understand why such discourse may not be as prevalent in those sectors. Related studies could be undertaken to compare both transformational leadership and communitarian orientation across those sectors.

This study makes no assumptions about the level of moral reasoning of the leader participants. Other studies suggest that transformational leaders demonstrate higher stages of moral reasoning. Future research on the practice of moral discourse might screen participants not only on their transformational leadership and communitarian orientations, but on their moral reasoning level, perhaps using Rest's (1979) Defining Issues Test. To that extent, a tripartite correlation between transformational leadership, communitarian orientation and moral development might be demonstrated.

As defined in this study, transformational leadership is critical leadership that seeks to build a more just world. Leaders' practice of moral conversation is integral to that purpose. Given that, it would seem that there is an appropriate interface between leaders' practice of moral discourse and critical ethnographic research that seeks to interpret history in the context of power relationships, with the aim to seek justice and

advance emancipation of all people (Quantz, 1992). The relevance of this research to Critical Theory underscores the connection. Future research might employ critical ethnography to address the power disparity that often exists in relationships among actors engaged in moral conversation.

The literature demonstrates that gender differences impact leadership style and moral reasoning (Bass, 1990; Gilligan, 1982). This study did not address to what extent such differences may exist in the practice of moral discourse. Comparisons with this study may be in order. For instance, is the direct style of moral discourse more masculine, and the indirect style more female? How do differences between an ethic of principle and an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) impact the practice of the discourse?

Finally, the elements of a moral discourse typology as postured herein need to be made tighter and clarified. In particular, the constructs of moral speech action, speech style, and function need further explication and delineation. If corroborating research can add clarity, the results may contribute to the development of quantitative assessment tools that can contribute new knowledge to better understand the dynamics of moral discourse and its relationship to transformational leadership ethics.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A   Letter and Form Sent to Nominators

nCCJ The National Conference
for Community and Justice

John W. Frank
P.O. Box 601047
Jacksonville, FL 32260
(904) 230-9531
Email:
jwf@diacomventures.com

NCCJ Leadership Study

MEMO   January 24, 2001

TO: (Prospective Nominator)
FROM: John W. Frank, Research Consultant
RE: *Request for Referrals*

I am requesting your assistance in my efforts to identify appropriate subjects to take part in focus groups and interviews for a research project I am undertaking with the sponsorship of the Jacksonville chapter of *The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ)*. The study is central to my doctoral dissertation at the University of North Florida.

The title of the study is *Transformational Leadership and Moral Discourse in the Workplace and Civil Society*. Its purpose is to better understand how leaders facilitate the formation of moral communities and how that impacts the formation of social capital within democratic society. Specifically, I want to expand knowledge on how leaders engage their followers, constituents, clients and organizational stakeholders in moral conversation and "values talk".

I need to identify an initial pool of 150 potential participants. That group will eventually be screened down to 20-25 who will actually take part in the study. I am requesting that you consider serving as one of my referral sources and to recommend participants for the study. Specifically, you are asked to nominate up to two persons in each of nine different categories of organizations, for a maximum of 18 referrals. The directions to the attached form define a desirable "profile" that I am looking for among the potential participants in the study.

Please return the nomination form to me by February 9th. A stamped return envelope is included for your convenience. I have also enclosed a copy of a letter from Laura D'Alisera attesting to NCCJ's support of the project. A similar packet has been mailed to a number of other referral sources in the community. If you have need for further clarification, I can be reached at (904) 230-9531 or via email jwf@diacomventures.com. I thank you for your kind consideration of this request.

Participant Nomination Form

You are asked to recommend prospective participants in a qualitative study on leadership practice. The researcher is attempting to identify a pool of potential focus group participants who demonstrate certain attributes and are representative of several different types of organizations. <u>Your responses are confidential and will be seen only by the researcher.</u> Your name, phone number and email address is requested in the event a nominee is selected for participation but cannot be reached based on the information you provide. In that case, you may be approached by the researcher to provide additional information that may be helpful in locating the nominee. Thank you for your assistance in this endeavor.

YOUR NAME: _____ **Email :** _____

Your phone number: (day) _____ **(evening)** _____

Directions: Please use the attached form to recommend up to **TWO** persons in each of nine organizational types. The organizational categories are:

(1) Schools and Educational Institutions (can be private or public);
(2) Human/Social/Service Providers;
(3) Non-profit Social, Arts, or Recreational organizations;
(4) Non-profit Advocacy, Philanthropic or Community Educational Groups;
(5) Private Industry;
(8) Media Organizations (TV, Press, Radio, etc.);
(7) Religious Organizations (churches, synagogues, temples, etc.);
(8) Public agencies and governmental bodies;
(9) Other (including the professions, i.e. lawyers, doctors, etc.);

Do your best to identify 2 nominees in each category. If you are unable to come up with sufficient nominees in a certain category, simply move on. Make your recommendations primarily on the basis of your own experience of the nominee rather than word-of-mouth or popular images that such persons may have in the community. <u>You may nominate yourself if you like.</u> Nominees may or may not be widely known in the community, and they may or may not serve in upper management. They may function in any level of the organization.

Participant Profile -- *Please identify nominees who best meet the following criteria:*
1. **Resident of Jacksonville** metropolitan community (Duval, St. John, Clay, Nassau, Baker counties);
2. Perceived as a **Leader** (paid or volunteer), either appointed, elected, hired or self-subscribed;
3. Demonstrates a **Transformational Leadership Style** reflecting dimensions of the following:
   - CHARISMATIC: Has an *idealized influence on others*, that is, engages subordinates trust, maintains their faith and respect because the leader shows dedication to them by appealing to subordinates hopes and dreams, and is perceived as their role model;
   - INSPIRATIONAL: Provides *inspirational motivation by providing vision*, using appropriate symbols and images to help others focus their work, and makes others feel their work is significant;
   - INTELLECTUAL: Provides *intellectual stimulation* by stretching people to consider new ideas and imagine alternatives and to question individual and organizational status quo values and beliefs;
   - CARING/ENABLING: Provides *individualized consideration* by keeping "in touch" with colleagues and subordinates and by showing interest in their well-bring, assigning projects individually, and paying attention to those who may seem less involved or committed to the group.
4. **Has excellent verbal communication skills** -- is knowledgeable, credible, and articulate and able to communicate effectively in conversation and meetings whether one-on-one or in group settings.
5. **Demonstrates a civic-mindedness that affirms the public/common good;** -- concerned and, to some extent, is involved in community issues; engaged in wider issues and concerns beyond those of the immediate organization in which the person functions; driven with a real concern to improve the quality of life of the larger community.

1. School or Educational Organization	2. Non-Profit Health & Human Service Provider Organization	3. Government or Public Agency (elected or appointed)
Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____

4. Civic Org. A: (philanthropy, community educ or advocacy)	5. Civic Org. B (fraternal, social, or recreational, i.e. Rotary)	6. Private Industry
Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____

7. Media	8. Religious Organization, church, synagogue, temple, etc.	9. Other (i.e. professions doctors, lawyers, etc.)
Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____
Name: _____ Title/Function _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____	Name: _____ Title/Function: _____ Org: _____

Appendix B
Nominee Profile Control Characteristics

CRITERIA	Uniform Control Characteristics <common to all participants>	Composition Control Characteristics <balanced across each focus group>
1. Jacksonville Area Citizen	x	
2. Leader	x	
3. Transformational Leadership Style	x	
4. Knowledgeable, credible & articulate	x	
5. With a communitarian orientation	x	
6. Male /Female Balanced		x
7. Ethnicity Balanced		x
8. Organizational Sector Balanced		x

Explanation of Control Characteristics

1. Jacksonville Area Citizen: Nominee should be resident of Jacksonville metropolitan area;

2. Holds a Leadership Position: Appointed, elected, employed or self subscribed leader, either in a paid or volunteer positions; may function in either upper or mid-level management role;

3. Transformational Leadership Style: Demonstrates a leadership style that is genuinely concerned with the performance of followers and colleagues by helping them achieve their fullest potential; transformational leaders have strong internal values and ideals that motivate others to act in ways that support the greater good rather than individual self interests [Kuhnert, 1994 #304]; the central function of a transformational leader is one who raises consciousness of followers in a process that empowers and emancipates; the transformational leader acts as a teacher and is able to understand the needs of others; transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in ways that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality, having a transforming effect on both [Burns, 1978 #15]; the transformational leader is one who promotes and facilitates the moral discourse, gives it energy, shapes it, nurtures it; rather than simply maintaining systems, the transformational leaders ferment dialogue that breeds change and innovation.

4. Knowledgeable, Credible, and Articulate: Nominee should be a person who is perceived as knowledgeable and credible persons within their organization, possessing excellent verbal communication skills and a person who is comfortable in situations involving group dialogue.

5. Communitarian Orientation: Nominee should demonstrate civic-mindedness that affirms the public good and some involvement in community issues; the persons engages wider issues and concerns beyond those of the immediate organization in which he or she functions; nominee has a real concern to improve the quality of life in Jacksonville; seeks to balance individual rights with social responsibility and advocate socially responsible behavior by influencing others in ways that solicit voluntary compliance to social policy that sustains the common good.

6. Male/Female Balanced: Nominees should be reasonably balanced across gender lines;

7. Racially Balanced: Nominees should be reasonably balanced across racial lines and reflective of local racial demographics;

8. Sector Balanced (Organizational Type): The composite of qualified nominees represents a cross section of organizations spread across the private, public and social sectors;

Appendix C
Invitation Letter Sent to 152 Candidates

nccj The National Conference
for Community and Justice

John W. Frank
P.O. Box 601047
Jacksonville, FL 32260
(904) 230-9531
Email: jwf@diacomventures.com

NCCJ Leadership Study

March 5, 2001

Dear _____ ,

On behalf of the Jacksonville region of the *National Conference for Community and Justice* (NCCJ), I am pleased to inform you that you have been nominated as a candidate for participation in a research study on leadership in our community. The purpose of the study is to better understand how leaders facilitate the formation of moral communities and how that impacts social capital within democratic civil society. Specifically, the project seeks to expand knowledge on how leaders engage their followers, constituents, clients and organizational stakeholders in moral conversation and "values talk." The methodology involves data collection through focus groups that will take place in late April and early May. You have been selected as a potential participant in one of those focus groups.

Your participation presumes no special knowledge. If selected, you would simply be asked to attend one focus group session and reflect with 6-8 other participants regarding aspects of your own leadership experience. If you are willing to serve as a participant in the study, you are asked to do two things:
- Complete the enclosed questionnaire (estimated time 20-30 minutes);
- Read and sign the statement of "informed consent" on p.6 of the questionnaire;

The questionnaire includes a place for you to indicate your availability from a list of several potential meeting times. All focus group sessions will take place at the University Center on the campus of the University of North Florida. A complimentary meal will be included. In order to have adequate time to schedule participation in the focus groups, it is critical that you return the questionnaire and consent form promptly, and not later than March 20th. A pre-addressed stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. If you do volunteer to participate, you may or may not be selected based on the need to create a composite of focus group participants that reflects a certain organizational profile and demographic balance. Whether or not you are selected, please be assured of the confidentiality of your responses to the questionnaire.

The design of this study places very high regard on the life experience of the focus group participants, their willingness to share together and the conversations that ensue. I believe you will find the process to be stimulating, enriching, and a means for personal growth and self awareness. Thank you for considering to participate. If you need to contact me personally, I can be reached at 230-9531 or via email at *jwf@diacomventures.com.*

Sincerely,

John W. Frank

Appendix D

Participant Screening Questionnaire

Control # _____

DIRECTIONS: The purpose of this questionnaire is to screen a particular composite of persons to participate in several focus groups that will explore how leaders engage their colleagues, employees, clients and constituents in moral conversation and "values talk." There are three parts to this questionnaire:

  Part A consists of 36 short statements about your leadership style.
  Part B asks your opinion on 18 public policy issues;
  Part C asks for basic demographic information about you and your current leadership role(s).

Please do *not* write your name on Part A or Part B. All responses are confidential and will be seen only by the researcher. Please be sure to respond to the final question in Part C, where you are asked to indicate your availability from a list of possible meeting times for the focus group sessions. Finally, please sign the Return Copy of the *Informed Consent Form* .

Please return this questionnaire and your signed "informed consent" by <u>*March 20th*</u> *to:*
NCCJ Leadership Project, c/o DiaComVentures, P.O. Box 60-1047, Jacksonville, FL 32260.
For further information, please contact John Frank at (904) 230-9531 or address Email to
jwf@diacomventures.com.

PART A: **Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.**

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

END PART "A"

PART B:

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

END PART "B"

| PART C: *Demographic Data* | Control # ____ |

(1) Your Name: _____ **(2) Work Phone:** _____ **Ext.** _____

(3) Email Address: _____

(4) Name the organization where you are currently employed: _____

(5) Your Title/Position: _____

(6) Mailing Address: _____

          City: _____ **Zip:** _____

(7) Sex: ☐ Female ☐ Male

(8) Age: ☐ Under 30 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50+

(9) Race: ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American ☐ Caucasian ☐ Other

(10) Briefly describe the mission of your organization: _____

_____

_____

(11) Briefly describe your role and function within the organization:

_____

_____

_____

(12) Indicate the approximate number of persons with whom you work closely on a fairly regular basis and briefly describe the nature of your relationship with those persons:

_____

_____

_____

(13) To whom, if anyone, do you report to within the organization?

_____

_____

_____

(14) Describe any involvement you may have in civic issues and community organizations outside your immediate work situation:

_____

_____

_____

(15) <u>FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULING</u>: If you are selected, you will be asked to participate in only ONE group session. However, to provide maximum scheduling flexibility, please check <u>ALL</u> time slots that you are likely to be available. The sessions will take place on the campus of the University of North Florida.

MONDAY evening, 6-9pm <w/dinner>:	April 16	April 23	April 30
TUESDAY morning, 8-11am <w/breakfast>	April 17	April 24	May 1
THURSDAY morning, 8-11am <w/breakfast>	April 19	April 26	May 3
THURSDAY evening, 6-9pm <w/dinner>	April 19	April 26	May 3

<u>**NOTE:** Please sign the *Informed Consent Form* on the back of this page. Thank You!</u>

Appendix E   <u>**Informed Consent**</u>

The purpose of the study is to better understand how leaders facilitate the formation of moral communities and how that impacts social capital within democratic civil society. Specifically, the study seeks to expand knowledge on how leaders engage their followers, constituents, clients and stakeholders in moral conversation and "values talk." You have been nominated as a prospective participant in the study based on your leadership style, your involvement in community affairs, and the type of organization(s) in which you function. This study presumes no special knowledge. All that you will be asked to do is reflect with the researcher and other persons in a focus group regarding certain aspects of your leadership experience.

The principal investigator for this study is **John W. Frank**, a doctoral candidate at the University of North Florida. The study is related to doctoral dissertation research approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University and sponsored by the **Jacksonville Region of the National Council for Community and Justice (NCCJ)**. Mr. Frank's doctoral committee chair is **Charles Galloway, Ed.D.** of the UNF College of Education & Human Services.

<u>**Your participation will involve the following activities**</u>:
(1) Completion of enclosed questionnaire designed to assess control characteristics of an initial pool of prospective candidates, to be used for determining the composition of several focus groups; (2) If selected, you will be invited to take part in one group interview (focus group) with six to eight other participants, to be scheduled at an appropriate time and location within the Jacksonville area. As principal researcher, Mr. Frank will function as facilitator of the focus group. Prior to arriving at the focus group, you may also be asked to do some personal reflection on several prompting questions designed to stimulate the conversation in the focus group; (3) Following the focus group, and at a different time, a smaller subset of the focus group participants will be asked to participate in one 60-minute individual interview with the researcher;

Focus group sessions and interviews will be tape recorded and include note-taking. Participation in these interviews is entirely voluntary. This is a qualitative study that places high regard on the role of the participants who in a certain way share together as "research partners" with the researcher. Other than token amenities and refreshments, there is no material compensation. However, it is likely that the experience will be personally enriching and stimulating for those who participate in it. The final report of this study will be disseminated in the form of an unpublished dissertation, to be available through the Library of the University of North Florida. However, this is not to preclude the researcher from using results associated with this study in future academic and professional activities that may include conference presentations and publication.

As a research participant, you have definite rights including the following:
(1) You may refuse to answer any question any time; (2) you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time; 3) you may ask questions at any time; and (4) you have a right to confidentiality. Though excerpts of focus group proceedings and interviews will be in the final dissertation, pseudonyms will be used in place of proper names, titles, and organizational affiliations. All records including tape recordings, field notes, and interview transcripts will be kept confidential and will be available only to the researcher.

Thank you for your willingness to be part of the process. If you need to contact Mr. Frank, he can be reached via email at *jwf@diacomventures.com*.

I have read and I understand the procedures described above. I agree to participate in the procedures, if selected. I have received a copy of this description.

Participant	Date	Witness	Date

Appendix F

Survey Results from 63 Respondents
(25 Selected Participants in Boldface)

MLQ Key:
TF = TransFormational Leadership
TA = TransActional Leadership
CR = Contingency Reward
LF = Laissez Faire

Karp's Communitarian Survey Key
K-Com = Communitarian Orientation
IND = Individualist Orientation
SC = Social Conservative Orientation

#	TF	TA	TF Leadership Orientation TF/TA sprd	CR	LF	Communitarian Orientation K-Com	IND	SC	Selection Rationale
43	14.00	9.30	4.70	16	5	10	0	5	NOT SELECTED; marginal TF/TA spread with high CR;
45	**14.00**	**7.00**	**7.00**	**12**	**2**	**9**	**4**	**2**	PARTICIPANT; solid TF; moderate K-Com w/ IND wing;
48	15.40	9.30	6.10	16	1	7	3	4	ALTERNATE; marginal K-Com;
54	14.40	9.70	4.70	14	1	9	5	1	SELECTED / Not Available;
56	13.40	7.30	6.10	11	6	6	7	2	NOT SELECTED; marginal K-Com w/very high IND;
57	13.60	7.60	6.00	14	2	7	7	1	NOT SELECTED; marginal K-Com w/very high IND;
62	**13.20**	**7.30**	**5.90**	**13**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**3**	PARTICIPANT; Solid TF/ K-COM;
67	11.20	5.30	5.90	8	3	11	1	3	SELECTED / Not Available; Solid TF / K-Com;
68	**13.80**	**6.00**	**7.80**	**13**	**5**	**13**	**0**	**2**	PARTICIPANT; Solid TF / K-Com;
80	12.80	7.70	5.10	14	7	8	3	4	NOT SELECTED; high CR & LF; mod K-Com;
85	15.80	9.70	6.10	15	7	10	0	5	ALTERNATE; high LF; solid K-Com,; over-reprsntd sctor;
88	**13.20**	**7.60**	**5.60**	**14**	**0**	**9**	**3**	**3**	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
90	**15.20**	**7.30**	**7.90**	**15**	**5**	**10**	**2**	**3**	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
98	14.00	6.30	7.70	12	3	7	5	3	NOT SELECTED; marginal K-Com w/high IND wing;
100	14.80	10.30	4.50	16	7	7	4	4	NOT SELECTED; Marginal scores, high CR & LF;
103	**12.60**	**5.00**	**7.60**	**14**	**1**	**6**	**7**	**2**	PARTICIPANT (Alternate); borderline, race/gender;
104	**13.40**	**6.30**	**7.10**	**6**	**7**	**9**	**4**	**2**	PARTICIPANT; borderline TF; mod K-Com;
110	14.00	8.70	5.30	15	3	9	4	2	SELECTED / Not Available;
115	11.40	7.70	3.70	13	0	12	2	1	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA spread w/high CR;
129	12.80	6.70	6.10	12	3	9	3	3	ALTERNATE; solid TF; mod K-Com; limited comnty invlvmnt;
130	12.40	10.30	2.10	14	4	11	2	2	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA spread and high CR;
131	11.00	8.00	3.00	12	3	7	3	4	NOT SELECTED; Low TF/TA spread; marginal K-Com;
132	14.00	12.60	1.40	16	1	10	1	4	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA spread and high CR;
135	**13.20**	**9.20**	**4.00**	**13**	**3**	**11**	**0**	**4**	PARTICIPANT; marg TF/TA sprd; solid K-Com;
137	11.00	6.30	4.70	8	7	12	3	0	NOT SELECTED; marg TF/TA Sprd; over-reprsntd sctr;

#	TF	TA	TF/TA sprd	CR	LF	K-Com	IND	SC	Selection Rationale
			TF Leadership Orientation			**Communitarian Orientation**			
138	11.80	7.30	**4.50**	9	3	12	1	2	PARTICIPANT; marginal TF/TA spread & solid K-Com;
142	11.80	4.00	**7.80**	9	0	10	1	4	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-com, with SC wing;
146	11.40	6.70	**4.70**	9	3	6	4	5	PARTICIPANT (Alternate); marginal scores w/ SC;
151	14.00	10.70	3.30	13	3	7	1	5	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd & marginal K-Com;
160	10.40	7.70	2.70	10	7	6	7	2	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd & high LF; marg K-Com;
177	14.60	7.30	**7.30**	13	5	10	4	1	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com w/IND wing;
183	14.40	9.00	**5.40**	14	3	8	3	4	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / moderate K-Com;
186	13.20	5.00	8.20	10	0	12	2	1	SELECTED / Not Available; solid TF / K-Com;
187	14.60	8.30	**6.30**	14	5	11	3	1	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
193	14.20	6.30	**7.70**	14	1	10	3	2	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com; ;
194	11.80	8.00	3.80	12	0	9	3	2	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd; low community invlvmnt;
198	14.40	8.30	6.10	14	0	8	5	2	SELECTED / Not Available; Solid TF / moderate K-Com;
201	12.40	5.30	**7.10**	10	1	10	2	3	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
212	15.60	8.30	7.30	15	5	9	1	5	NOT SELECTED; solid TF/ mod K-Com; over-reprsntd sctr;
213	10.80	7.60	3.20	10	1	10	3	2	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd; mod K-Com, small org;
214	11.40	6.60	4.80	12	0	7	7	1	NOT SELECTED; marginal scores w/high IND;
222	14.80	6.30	8.50	15	2	12	1	3	SELECTED / Not Available; solid TF / K-Com;
228	16.00	8.00	**8.00**	14	1	10	1	4	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com w/SC wing;
229	15.40	6.00	**9.40**	14	1	10	2	2	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
230	14.20	9.00	5.20	12	4	4	4	7	NOT SELECTED; insufficient K-Com and high SC;
238	12.20	8.30	3.90	12	3	7	4	4	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd; low comnty invlvmnt;
247	12.60	8.00	4.60	11	4	8	0	7	NOT SELECTED; marg TF/TA sprd; over-reprsntd sctr;
253	14.00	5.60	**8.40**	14	0	8	4	3	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / moderate K-Com;
259	15.60	6.30	**9.30**	15	5	13	0	1	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
260	12.80	8.60	4.20	14	4	9	3	3	ALTERNATE / Not Available; marg TF/TA sprd; high CR;
262	13.20	10.60	2.60	16	4	8	5	2	NOT SELECTED; low TF/TA sprd; /high CR; mod K-Com;
263	14.10	6.20	7.90	11	3	7	5	3	SELECTED (Alternate) / Not Available; marginal K-Com;
264	13.20	9.00	**4.20**	14	3	9	5	1	PARTICIPANT; marg TF/TA sprd; mod K-Com;
265	14.20	7.70	6.50	14	0	6	6	3	NOT SELECTED; marginal K-Com; high IND wing;
267	14.20	7.00	7.20	13	0				NOT SELECTED; incomplete Survey;
269	12.00	7.30	4.70	14	5	8	4	2	NOT SELECTED; high CR; over-reprsntd sctr;
270	14.00	6.00	**8.00**	13	0	8	4	3	PARTICIPANT; solid TF/ mod K-Com;
272	11.80	6.60	5.20	11	3	11	1	3	SELECTED - Not Available; solid TF / K-Com;
277	14.40	7.00	7.40	13	1	7	4	4	NOT SELECTED; solid TF; mod K-Com; high SC; small org;
281	13.80	6.70	**7.10**	14	0	10	1	4	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com w/SC;
284	12.60	8.30	**4.30**	13	4	9	3	3	PARTICIPANT; marginal TF / moderate K-Com;
286	15.00	7.30	**7.70**	14	1	11	1	3	PARTICIPANT; solid TF / K-Com;
291	14.20	8.00	6.20	14	5	6	5	4	NOT SELECTED; marginal K-Com w/ high IND wing;

Appendix G
Focus Group Discussion Guide Overview

Each Focus Group involved two hours of substantive conversation. The following sample timeline illustrates the format used in all three focus groups, and includes an additional 30 minute set-up period, 30 minutes of hospitality and welcoming around an informal meal, as well as a 30 minute post session debriefing after the participants departed.

8:00	Set-up
8:30	Participants gather; Hospitality w/Food and Beverage Service
9:00	Focus Group Part I
10:05	BREAK
10:15	Focus Group Part II
11:00	Focus Group Adjourns/ Participants thanked and dismissed
11:10	Post-Session Debriefing (Facilitator and Assistant)
11:30	END

The following is an overview of the discussion guide. The actual guide was more substantial and included optional prompting questions subsumed into the main questions listed here.

PART 1

15 min   A. Welcome and Introduction   [Opening]
          1. Introduction of participants, facilitator and recorder;
          2. The purpose of the research and the focus groups;
          3. Rules of engagement;

25 min   B. Reflections on Personal Experience   [Introductory Questions]
          #1 Solicit Stories of behavior that engage values talk in public settings;
          #2 Solicit Stories of behavior that avoid values talk in public settings;

30 min   C. Unpacking the Experience   [KEY Questions]
          #3 What Factors inhibit Moral Discourse?
          #4 What Factors stimulate Moral Discourse?
          #5 What are the venues for Moral Discourse? Who, What, Where, When, How?

10 min   BREAK

PART 2

35 min   D. Understanding the Experience   [Interpretive Questions]
          #6 How do we value diversity yet pursue the common good?
          #7 How does public moral conversation impact organizational culture?
          #8 How does public moral conversation impact civil society and democracy?

10 min   E. Concluding Conversation   [Ending]
          #9. Summation Question: So what? What is the meaning/significance of all this?

Appendix H

Reflection Exercise Used to Prompt the Focus Groups

nccj The National Conference
for Community and Justice

Leadership Research Project
How Leaders Engage Others in Moral Discourse

Reflection Exercise Prior to Interview

Although our discussion in the interview presumes no special knowledge, we do want to ask you to do a bit of personal reflection designed to prompt your thinking and to get you in touch with your own experience as it relates to the subject of our inquiry. To that end and prior to the interview, we ask you to reflect on the following two questions. This exercise is simply designed to prompt your thinking and to call to mind real life experiences that may serve as a fertile landscape for dialogue in the interview;

(1) Describe by way of anecdote or story, a true life experience when you expressed deeply held values in a public setting where at least three persons were present. You may use your current work setting or a previous one, a public meeting within any organization or governmental agency, a church or synagogue, neighborhood group, or any other organizational setting. The following probes may stimulate your thinking:

- What was the context or circumstance?
- Who was present? What was their purpose in gathering? How many people were involved?
- Did you initiate or raise the level of conversation to a moral context or was it already there?
- What did you say?
- Can you identify the motivations and underlying values that moved you to speak out?
- After expressing yourself, how did you feel?
- How did others react to what you said? Were your comments ignored? Did they stimulate further dialogue or stop the conversation cold? Why so?
- If you were the "leader" in the group, what effect did it have on others' perception of your leadership?
- If you weren't the "leader", how did the perceived leader of the group react to you?
- What effect, if any, did your discourse have on the group's action or decisionmaking?

(2) Think of another time when you purposefully avoided speaking out on a matter that stirred you deeply. Consider the following probes:
- What was the context, setting and circumstance?
- What were the unspoken motivations and values that stirred you?
- What was it that you did NOT say?
- Why did you choose not to speak out? Can you name some of the inhibitors?
- What, if any, was the consequence of you not speaking out?
- How did you feel afterwards?

Thank You!

Appendix I

<u>Sample Questions used in Individual Interviews</u>

1. CREATING THE VENUES FOR CONVERSATION: Where do you create the open space for moral conversation in your own sphere of influence?

2. GROUP MORAL DECISIONMAKING: In what ways do you engage groups in moral decisionmaking? Can you think of examples?

3. THE TABOO OF RELIGION AND POLITICS: The roots of our deepest values and moral beliefs often spring from our religious and political convictions. And yet, we're often taught as adults to avoid talking about those beliefs in public space. Please comment on that. Is that your experience? Why is it so? What are the consequences?

4. THE INFLUENCE OF RULES and POLICIES: To what extent do the rules, policies, and procedures influence the practice of values talk in your workplace?

5. MORAL WELLS: What are the moral wells, the fountains of reflectivity in your own life? What are the safe places, the safe environments, the safe relationships where you go to in order to engage with other people to think through what you really believe, what you really value?

6. MORAL DISCOURSE AND DEMOCRACY: I am curious to know if your experience of moral conversation with others has something to do with your understanding and practice of democracy in civil society. Do you ever bring into everyday casual conversation, your beliefs about the events of the day, for instance, in the context of current events, news items on the local, national or international scene that have values import, i.e. McVeigh's execution? If you do, comment on how you talk about those events and to what extend you inject your own beliefs and values as you reflect on those events with others. Where does that kind of civic conversation happen?

7. FORUMS FOR CIVIC MORAL DISCOURSE: Where are the forums in the larger civic community for values-based conversation? Think of models that you know of or have participated in. Comment on them. Are they appropriate venues for values talk? If not, can you suggest alternative models?

8. PAST FORMATIVE EXPERIENCES: Think about your past life, your upbringing and experience. Where did you learn to talk about values and who may have modeled it for you as you grew into adulthood. How have those experiences influenced your leadership style and practice?

9. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS vs. COMMON GOOD: Think about the contrast between individual rights and our social responsibility to the larger community. At what point does the affirmation of the individual reach a point of diminishing returns, when it impedes the common good? Can you think of examples where you have experienced that tension in your own moral discourse, or observed it in others'?

10. SUSPENDING JUDGMENT: How do you suspend judgment on others' values while still being true to your own beliefs? Can you give me some examples in your own experience?

Appendix J

Categories and Subcategories by Family Groups

1000 VENUES FOR THE CONVERSATION (Family Group)

1100 ARENA
    1110 Arena: FRIENDS & FAMILY
    1120 Arena: WORKPLACE
    1130 Arena: CIVIL SOCIETY
    1140 Arena: POLITICAL BODY

1200 EVENT
    1210 Event: SITUATIONAL EVENT
    1220 Event: INTENTIONAL EVENT
    1230 Event: SERENDIPITOUS EVENT

1300 ISSUE

1400 CORE VALUE(S)

2000 IMPEDIMENTS TO THE CONVERSATION (Family Group)

2100 INDIVIDUAL DYNAMICS
    2110   EFFICACY (Lack of Self Efficacy)
        2111   Hostility Anticipated, so won't be efficacious
        2112   Not Worth The Cost
        2113   No Time to be efficacious
        2114   System is Overwhelming, not efficacious
        2115   People Don't Change, not efficacious
        2116   Burn-out
    2120   FALSE ASSUMPTIONS
        2121   Prejudice / Bigotry
        2122   Labeling / Stereotyping
        2123   Judging / Blaming
    2130   FEAR of HOW OTHERS PERCEIVE US (Misunderstood)
        2131   Fear of Hurting or Embarrassing the other
        2132   Intentionality Problem (FEAR)
        2135   Fear of Losing Security
        2136   Fear of Loss of Job/Economic Security
        2137   Fear of Losing Face (Social Security)
        2139   Fear & Anxiety Re: Change / Unknown
    2140   MORAL ABSOLUTISM (Rigid Thinking)
        2141   Defensiveness - Feeling Intimidated/Attacked
        2142   Not Listening
        2143   Comfort Zones
    2150   SELF-AGGRANDIZING ATTITUDE

2160 EMOTIONALISM, (Out of Control)
2170 SELF-DOUBT (opposite of Self Mastery)
    2171 Intimidated, Feeling
    2172 Low Self Esteem/Self Confidence,
    2173 Uncertainty
2180 AWARENESS, Lack of / Ignorance
2190 NOT TAUGHT how to do MD
2195 PAST EXPERIENCE - Negative Influence

2200 SOCIAL/CULTURAL DYNAMICS
2210 DOMINANT CULTURAL DISCOURSE
2220 PAROCHIALISM (Ghetto Mentality)
2230 IDEOLOGY (Fixed Belief Systems)
    2231 Controversial Issue that has become polarized
2240 CULTURAL / ETHNIC VARIANCE (Geo/Historical)
2250 FACT / VALUE Split
2260 SOCIAL CAPITAL, Loss of
    2261 Isolation, Social
    2262 No Time for Relationships
    2263 Trust, Lack of
2270 NATURAL COMMUNITIES, Lack of

3000 STIMULANTS TO THE CONVERSATION (Family Group)

3100 INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATORS
3110 PASSION DRIVEN
3120 SELF-INTEREST as Positive Motivator
3130 SELF MASTERY as Stimulant
3140 RISK CAPACITY
3150 URGENCY TO ACT
3160 PAST EXPERIENCE - Positive Influence

3200 SOCIAL COMMUNICATIVE DYNAMICS
3210 SAFE PLACES (Campfire)
3220 OPEN COMMUNICATION PROCESS
    3221 Presumes Good Intention of the Other
    3222 Honesty
    3223 Listening posture
    3224 Suspending Judgment (Stimulant)
    3225 Non-Coercion, builds trusting relationships
3230 EMPATHY
    3231 Resonance
    3232 Validation
    3233 Solidarity
3240 COMMON GROUND
    3241 Shared Experience
    3242 Shared Meaning
    3243 Consensus

3250   RELATIONSHIPS (precursor to Community)
        3251   Trust
        3252   Mutual Respect

4000   SPEECH ACTIONS, STYLE AND FUNCTION (Family Group)

4100 SPEECH ACTIONS
      4110   SPEECH ACTIONS - Positive
            4111   Sp Act #1: Initiates
            4112   Sp Act #2: Intervenes
            4113   Sp Act #3: Responds
      4120   SPEECH ACTIONS - Negative
            4121   Sp Act #4: Withdraws (Neg)
            4122   Sp Act #5: Withholds (Neg)
            4123   Sp Act #6: Abdicates (Neg)

4200 STYLES OF ENGAGEMENT: Direct vs. Indirect
      4210   STYLE - Direct
            4211   Fnct #01: Teach
            4212   Fnct #02: Problem-Solve
            4213   Fnct #03: Correct / Admonish
            4214   Fnct #04: Challenge / Confront
            4215   Fnct #05: Advocate
      4220   STYLE - Indirect
            4221   Fnct #06: Speculate / Observe
            4222   Fnct #07: Motivate / Inspire
            4223   Fnct #08: Reconcile / Heal
            4224   Fnct #09: Question
            4225   Fnct #10: Acknowledge
            4226   Fnct #11: Validate
            4227   Fnct #12: Self-Disclose

5000   SPECIFIC LEADER PRACTICES (Family Group)

5100 INTERNAL PRACTICES
      5110   PERSONAL GROWTH, Committed to
            5111   Authenticity / Self Actualization
            5112   Self Mastery, Strengths & Limitations
      5120   REFLECTIVITY, SELF
      5130   Re-EVALUATE VALUES
            5131   Moral Absolutism, Beware
            5132   Intellectual Honesty
            5133   Values Can Change
      5140   INTEGRAL THINKING (non-dualism)
            5141   Integrating worldview / Big Picture
            5142   Integrity: A fuller meaning

5150   NURTURE / SUSTAIN one's own MORAL VISION
       5151   Purposefulness / Life Mission (Nurture)
       5152   Long Haul / Resilience (Nurture)
       5153   Dignity Of All, Fund Belief (Nurture)
       5154   Social Justice Consciousness (Nurture)
       5155   Moral Wells, have (Nurture)
       5156   Spirituality / Faith Stance

5200 EXTERNAL PRACTICES
    5210   MODEL MORAL REFLECTIVITY FOR OTHERS
       5211   Set Tone that motivates others
       5212   Not WHAT you say, but HOW you say it
       5213   Transparent / (they disclose)
       5214   Vulnerable (Defenseless)
       5215   Listening, hone skills
       5216   Suspend Judgment (practice)
       5217   Approachability (Practice)
       5218   Maturity, Growing in Age & Wisdom
       5219   Mentoring
    5220   PROACTIVE - Create VENUES for MD
       5221   Meetings Protocol
    5230   STRATEGIC USE of MORAL DISCOURSE
       5231   Timing
       5232   Leverage
       5233   Do Their Homework
       5234   Focus Priorities / Ends
       5235   Build Bridges / Get Buy-In
       5236   Weigh Costs and Consequences
       5237   Flexibility of Style & Function
    5240   APPEAL TO JUSTICE, SERVICE & SOCIAL ETHICS
    5250   LEAD WITH SOUL (Play, Pray & Celebrate)
    5260   COMMUNITIES of TRUST, BUILD (practice)
       5261   Small Groups & Teams, Nurture

6000   MD in the WORKPLACE & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE (Family Group)

6100 IMPEDIMENTS TO MD IN THE WORKPLACE
    6110   DOMINANT ORGANIZATIONAL DISCOURSE
    6120   MISSION CAN DRIVE THE MD
       6121   Recollected / Re-evaluated
       6122   Driven, but Blindsighted
       6123   As Dominant Discourse
       6124   Competing Interests
       6125   Mission vs. Community
    6130   POWER
       6131   Power as Disparity within Organizations
       6132   Power as Disparity Influenced by Roles
       6133   Power that Defers to Experts/Authority

Appendix K

Stories Matrix
(59 stories were actually plotted)

Rating:
(+) = constructive moral conversation; (X) = Moral conversations blocked or short-circuited;
(-) = Moral conversations avoided outright;   (?) = Moral conversations with mixed effects;

The VENUE   Dynamics of the Conversation

LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	ARENA	ISSUE	EVENT	CORE VALUE(s)	IMPEDI-MENTS	STIMU-LANTS	SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION	STYLE
1 PEGGY Nonprofit Educ/Advcy FG1 #36 (+)	Workplace	Sexual harrassment in Workplace	Serendipitous	It's degrading; We need to talk about it;	Fear of embarrassing self or others;	Self-Disclosure motivates others;	Initiates by self-disclosing and *validating* others' experience;	INDIRECT
2 ERIC Media FG1 #47 (+)	Workplace	Treating customers fairly	Situational	Fairness and honesty;	?	His role & status as consumer advocate expert	Responds by *advocating & teaching* higher ethical standards;	DIRECT
3 ERIC Media FG1 #48 (?)	Friends & Family	Child's school performance; Teacher's "disturbing" Style	Situational	Welfare of one's child; teacher needs to "teach";	Self Interest, my child right or wrong.	Self Interest	Initiates by *correcting & admonishing* teacher;	DIRECT
4 FRAN Private Industry FG1 #52 (+)	Civil Society	Understand what it means to be a victim of prejudice	Intentional	Prejudice is wrong and it is hurtful;	?	Empathy builds common ground; A safe place	Initiates by facilitating reflection that *acknowledges and validates;*	DIRECT
5 DONNA NonProfit HumanServ FG1 # 57 (+)	Workplace	Pending changes in organization's structure	Situational	Honesty. What's really going on here?	Fear of what other might think; disparity of power; mistrust;	Speaker is validated by others who then also speak out;	Intervenes by *asking* the unspoken question;	INDIRECT
6 JACOB NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG1 #64 (X)	Friends & Family	Funding the bilingual program; teacher/ student ratio	Situational	Welfare of one's child; Fairness for the principal;	Not enough time; efficacy; it will hurt the principal;	Self interest	Withdraws after first attempting to *solve problem*	DIRECT
7 CAROL Rel/Church FG1 #74 (X)	Friends & Family	Daughter's "social" promotion into High School	Situational	Welfare of one's child'	Defer to Experts and school bureaucracy;	Self Interest	Withdraws after first *confronting* Teachers & School Board;	DIRECT

Stories Matrix

The VENUE					*Dynamics of the Conversation*			
LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	**ARENA**	**ISSUE**	**EVENT**	**CORE VALUE(s)**	**IMPEDI-MENTS**	**STIMU-LANTS**	**SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION**	**STYLE**
8 ERIC Media FG1 #85 (X)	Workplace	Needs of African-Americans at TV station & in community	Situational	Open Dialogue about Race Relations is important	Laisez faire News director; Organizatio nal Protocol inhibits;	?	News Dir **Abdicates;** Eric **Responds** by *question-ing*;	INDIRECT (Eric)
9 PEGGY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG1 #104f (X)	Workplace	Inclusive Prayer	Situational	Tolerance, and respect for diverse religious beliefs	Intolerance, and prejudice	?	**Withdraws** after first initiating by *advocating;*	DIRECT
10 PEGGY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG1 #148 (+)	Workplace	How to evaluate Outcome Measures	Situational	The students are more important than the numbers;	Dominant Org. Dis-course; Pro-ductivity; Quantitative bias;	Taking the risk to ask the question;	**Initiates** by *speculating & question-ing* business as usual;	INDIRECT
11 PEGGY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG1 #149 (?)	Workplace	What Grants are worthy to pursue?	Situational	Clarity of Org's purpose.	?	She clarifies org mission and reminds board of it;	**Intervenes** by *speculating* feedback, & questioning;	INDIRECT
12 HERB Private Industry FG2 #33 (+)	Civil Society	Judge's racist comments & the comnty's moral outrage;	Situational	Common good; all parties have equal right to speak;	speaking truth to power; .	Identification of common values;	Multiple Actions: **Initiates** CofC; **Inter-venes** with Judge; **Responds** to KKK;	DIRECT and INDIRECT
13 LISA NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG2 #43 (?)	Civil Society	Racism Judge and Ripple Effect	Situational		?	?	**Responds** by *inspiring* others to practice Conflict Resolution;	INDIRECT
14 ELLI Rel/Church FG2 #47 (?)	Political Body	Prayer at H.S. Graduation	Situational	Respect religious diversity; prayer should not be hurtful	Individual right; Rigid beliefs imposed; Hostility; Efficacy; Protocols;	?	**Responds** by taking a stand that *advocates* a reconciling compromise;	INDIRECT
15 JACOB Rel/Church FG2 #50 (+)	Civil Society	Strategic Plan to reduce juvenile crime; Racism;	Intentional	Belief that most kids are really good; Community assets sustain them;	?	His passion for kids; sense of personal mission; able to see larger picture;	**Intervenes** by *refocusing* and shifting the conversation to serve a higher end value;	INDIRECT

Stories Matrix

	The VENUE				*Dynamics of the Conversation*			
LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	ARENA	ISSUE	EVENT	CORE VALUE(s)	IMPEDI-MENTS	STIMU-LANTS	SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION	STYLE
16 **DAN** NonProfit HumanServ FG2 - #55 (X)	Civil Society	Poverty among blacks in inner city Detroit	Serendipi-tous	Dan's concern for social justice, plights of poor blacks;	Bigotry and prejudice; Dan's self-righteous-ness & anger;	?	**Responds** by attempting to *correct*, but is "preachy" and judging.	DIRECT
17 **DEBBIE** Public/Govt FG2 #63 (-)	Workplace	Perform-ance review to justify a pre-determined raise;	Situational	Integrity; Conflict of personal ethics vs. political realities;	Politics; Fear of Job Loss; Efficacy; Not worth the cost.	Venting and reflection with spouse.	**Withholds,** choosing to comply and doesn't talk about it w/ superiors;	N/A
18 **SARAH** Higher Education FG2 - #73 (-)	Civil Society	Growth pro-blem; Proposal to restrict member-ship to local residents	Situational	Inclusivity; Need to welcome all;	Intimidation by "rich, powerful male"; Fears loss of image if she loses control;	?	**Withholds,** holding in her strong feelings and anger;	N/A
19 **LISA** NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG2 #68 (-)		Public prayer "in the name of Jesus;"	Situational	Wanting to fee included as a Jew	Feels its **useless,** the person is not open and won't change	?	**Withholds,** keeping thoughts to herself, but vents later w/others.	N/A
20 **LARRY** NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG1 #80 (-)	Friends & Family	Concern that someone will get hurt;	Situational	People can best learn from their own life experience;	Let them learn from their own actions;	His customary role to be the "moral ruler" of the household;	**Withholds** and says nothing with no regrets;	N/A
21 **STEVE** Higher Education FG2 #130 (-)	Civil Society	World Religions	Intentional	Core values are common to all religions;	?	Open learning environment	**Withholds** and trusts students to come to their own awareness.	INDIRECT
22 **JACOB** Rel/Church FG2 #138 (+)	Civil Society	Understand what it means to be a victim of prejudice	Intentional	Respect and Value other's life experi-ence even if one doesn't agree;	Prejudice and labels that blind;	Suspending Judgment; Self disclose one's feelings & beliefs; True tolerance;	**Responds** by *acknowledg-ing & valida-ting* values of others & discloses his own;	INDIRECT
23 **DEBBIE** Public/Govt FG2 #144 (?)	Civil Society	Her year as the group's first minority president.	Situational	Racism hurts.	Prejudice & bigotry; Dominant organiza-tional discourse;	?	**Withholds;** Never had a chance; org culture would not allow it;	N/A

Stories Matrix

	The VENUE				*Dynamics of the Conversation*			
LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	ARENA	ISSUE	EVENT	CORE VALUE(s)	IMPEDI-MENTS	STIMU-LANTS	SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION	STYLE
24 MARSHA Private Industry FG3 #31 (-)	Workplace	Colleagues didn't show up for Mtg she called; letter of complaint about her;	n/a	Self-worth;	Colleagues are prejudicial to female mgrs; She resorts to moral "fiber" and self pride.	She wants to "prove" herself as female mgr; positive self interest;	Withholds consciously chooses not to speak, but proves herself in actions;	N/A
25 MARSHA Private Industry FG3 #33 (+)	Workplace	PR mess with VP's interview w/press; his denial of any problem;	Situational	Doing her job well as PR Director;	Prejudice against females managers;	Her feedback is validated by others;	Intervenes by *challenging & confronting* the VP's false under-standing;	**DIRECT**
26 MARSHA Private Industry FG3 #34 (+)	Workplace	A problem that the company president denies exists.	Situational	Speak the truth, even when it is not popular;	Denial ; Dominant Org. Discourse	Eventually validation by others, "Marsha's right!"	Intervenes by going against the tide to *correct* the group's blindsight.	**DIRECT**
27 DAVID FG3 #36 Secondary Education (+)	Workplace	Bond Levy with heavy "no" black vote; super blames principals	Situational	Equal access to quality education for minorities;	Power disparity; he has little authority within the group.	Feels empowered by others' validation; takes risks	Intervenes by taking risk to *confront* Supv; goes out on limb; Super withdraws;	**DIRECT**:
28 BRIAN Higher Education FG3 #49 (+)	Workplace	Planning Holiday office party;	Situational	Diversity and religious tolerance;	Fears being impolite or a trouble-maker; small stature; insecure in new job;	Solidarity with Jewish wife; aware-ness that no one else has yet said it;	Intervenes, by asking a question;	**INDIRECT**
29 BRIAN Higher Education FG3 #53 (-)	Friends & Family	Mindless racial slurs by guest done in course of board game;	Serendipi-tous	Dignity of all; Anti-Semitism is wrong;	Social manners; it's impolite.	Solidarity with his wife;	Withholds and says nothing; Ignored comment, but he & wife felt "awkward" ;	N/A
30 JOE Rel/Church FG3 #54 (+)	Civil Society	How to radicalize others to do political action on behalf of homeless;	Situational	Even the homeless have human dignity.	Bureaucratic agencies that restrict human contact;	Social justice conscience; Empathy and solidarity with others;	Intervenes by *facilitating reflection* on their experi-ence working w/homeless.	**INDIRECT**

Stories Matrix

The VENUE   **_Dynamics of the Conversation_**

LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	ARENA	ISSUE	EVENT	CORE VALUE(s)	IMPEDI-MENTS	STIMU-LANTS	SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION	STYLE
31 GEORGE Media FG3 #62 (+)	Workplace	MLK day not a paid holiday	Situational	Affirm civil rights;	?	Timely & con current with wider public debate; Org culture w/ open mtngs;	**Initiates** by *advocating* the case and gets it;	**DIRECT**
32 GEORGE Media FG3 #63 (-)	Workplace	Managing Ed was arrested for cocaine possession in area served by paper.	Situational	He should suffer the consequen-ces & be dismissed.	Fear of losing job if speaks against Mgr Ed; Mistrust of others; MD limited to watercooler	?	**Withholds** at staff mtg, but silently agrees with others who spoke;	N/A
33 CINDY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG3 #64 (+)	Political Body	Economi-cally & socially depressed neighbor-hood & Comnty Ctr.	Situational	Love for the neighbor-hood she grew up in;	?	Positive memories; access to political process via town mtgs; homework;	**Initiates** by *advocating* at the meetings and getting the other to collaborate;	**DIRECT**
34 CINDY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG3 #70 (?)	Workplace	Support for Minority Contractors	Situational		We forget to take time to build relation-ships;	Reminds the group about the organiza-tion's mission and purpose;	**Intervenes** by taking a position that *educates* others "lays it on the table";	**DIRECT**
35 CINDY NonProfit Educ/Advcy FG3 #101 (X)	Political Body	Concern about legislation to restore a "Cracker House"	Situational	Sees it as a racist phrase derogatory to whites;	Cultural differences between blacks/whit es; Not important to many; no one asked;	?	**Intervenes** by asking a challenging question	**DIRECT**
36 RYAN Private Industry Intrv #6 (?)	Political Body	Exit road needed for military beach comm in case of hurricane.	Situational	Safety	not in my backyard; self interest; political apathy" past failure;	?	**Intervenes** through persistent *advocacy*, "standing tall";	**DIRECT**
37 RAY Private Industry Intrv #9 (?)	Workplace	conflict w/ consultants who recom-mend downsizing workforce	Situational	Fairness to employees is fundamental value of the corporation.	?	Personal & workplace value congruence; See bigger picture; empathy;	**Intervenes** Spoke out, *admonished* and called group to accounta-bility;	**DIRECT**
38 CHUCK Secondary Education Intrv #34 (+)	Workplace	Talking be-hind other principal's back not pre-sent in a public forum	Situational	Accused has right to be present and to defend himself;	?	Concern for Professional Ethics; Deep Anger; Validation by others	**Intervenes &** *admonishes* colleagues & insist that the talk end or he would leave;	**DIRECT**

Stories Matrix

The VENUE   *Dynamics of the Conversation*

LEADER Org. Sector Reference Rating	ARENA	ISSUE	EVENT	CORE VALUE(s)	IMPEDI-MENTS	STIMU-LANTS	SPEECH ACTION & FUNCTION	STYLE
39 CHUCK Secondary Education Intrv #60 (-)	Workplace	Supvr's call to solve problem of Low scores;	Situational	Schools need the material resources to change'	Past scars, wounds; Fear of being seen as rebel rouser; lack of efficacy;	?	Withholds, out of frustration; spoke on this for 10 years & nothing changed;	N/A
40 CHUCK Secondary Education Intrv #128 (+)	Workplace	Faculty member voices dissents about grade inflation	Situational	Participation is essential to gain buy-in on larger org vision;	?	Creates open space that frees dissenter to speak;	Responds by *validating* dissenter's right to share her view;	INDIRECT
41 PATRICIA Public/Govt Intrv #19f (?)	Political Body	Colleague speaks in defense of fired principal	Situational	It was unjust to defend the guilty princi-pal; 3 teach-ers were hurt badly;	?	Urgency to act; empathy w/ teachers; validation by those at mtg;	Intervenes by clarifying who the real victims are;	DIRECT
42 PATRICIA Public/Govt Intrv #98 (+)	Political Body	Sex Ed Curr that promotes responsible sexuality & prevents teen pregnancy	Situational	Respecting freedom of indiv to make responsible choices;	?	Desire to build consensus; discovery of shared values & new common ground;	Intervenes by *suggesting* alternative;	INDIRECT
43 ERIC Media FG3 #151 (?)	Civil Society	Tension between inner city residents of Cincinnati and police	Serendipi-tous	Need to bet beyond "us and them"	?	his role power;	Responds by making an observation;	INDIRECT
44 DEBBIE Public/Govt Intrv #105 (-)	Civil Society	OJ Simpson verdict	Serendipi-tous	?	Many, see record #1575		Withholds and flees the room;	N/A
45 SARAH Education Intrv #59f (X)	Civil Society	Budget Issue	Situational	Everyone has right to be heard;	Parliamenta ry Procedure		All parties coerced to Withhold;	N/A
46 DAVID Education Intrv #47 (+)	Workplace	Race Relations & Black History Month	Situational	Respecting others values and feelings;	Dominant Cultural Discourse; Culture & Ethnic Variance;	Openness: listening, honesty, suspending judgment;	Responds by Validating and Reconciling;	INDIRECT
47 JOE Church Intrv #36f (X)	Civil Society	Outreach to the Homeless	Situational	Respect for human dignity	Efficacy; "Not in my backyard" Dominant Discourse;		Withdraws, after first initiating; not worth the cost;	INDIRECT

Appendix L

Sample Category Data Base Report #1

Not Worth The Cost

2112

2 IMPEDIMENTS to the Conversation

IMP -Individual Dynamics

| Not worth the cost in material, emotional or intellectual capital; takes too much time; |

 # 895 DAVID   FG #3   *p# 74f*
Not worth the cost of emotional capital
Text: if I am at the water cooler, and Mary, or say, John, Bill -- are just spouting off in the
          rhetoric. I make a determination. Do I want to invest my energy and the emotional content of that
          energy in an one-on-one ego kind of thing, back and forth, that becomes more of a debate, than a
          dialogue? I make calculations, and I choose in those calculations, as to whether or not I want to
          get involved in an ego struggle or not ... and then, what the benefit, the cost-benefits of that ego
          struggle may be ... that the benefits do not outweigh the costs at that time.

 # 903 JOE   FG #3   *p# 86*
Text: ...there are situations you think, well, this doesn't really make much difference in the course
          of things, its not worth my investing myself

#1781 JOE   Ind. INTERVIEW   *p# 28*
Text: Or you get your way on something, but you pay dearly for it, because you had to turn in too much
          of your capital on something ...

 # 152 FRAN   FG #1   *p# 70*
Text: Sometimes you just ... sometimes you are weighing the risks against the benefit,
          and so sometimes you choose not to take the risk ...because usually it is pretty risky ...

 # 137 TIM   FG #1   *p# 64-66*
Story 6: Just not worth the cost of time and decision when made, would be too late
Text: I just realized we couldn't fight it in enough time for it to make an effect, because it would have
          taken a year for any kind of appeals to be made in any kind of decision, but by that time, my
          daughter would have lost another year.

 # 1952 CHUCK   Ind. INTERVIEW   *p# 74*
Cost in human, emotional capital
Text: and sometimes you get tired of saying it, or wonder if the person is ... who might be directing ... is
          going to be listening or ... wondering too about ... how much, how much are you going to spend,
          how much of your capital are you going to spend on this particular issue, with this
          particular person. Will it make a difference?

 # 505 DEBBIE   FG #2   *p# 63-65*
Story#17 - Sandra and the request to write job performance
Text: "but you know, you have to pick your battles ... I think about it often ... is it worth it? ... does it
          compromise everything that I believe in? "

          *She does the calculus to determine if its really work the cost of possibly losing her job in a politically
          appointed position in the city. She accesses when its appropriate (read, safe) to speak, and when
          its not. When the potential gains outweigh the risks, when the benefits will likely outweigh the costs.*

Sample Category Data Base Report #2

Common Ground: SHARED MEANING   3 STIMULANTS to the Conversation
3242   *STIM - Social/Cultural Dynamic*

> As the base of Shared Experience expands, people can begin to find SHARED MEANING in those experiences. All this builds common ground of understanding;

985   **CINDY**   FG #3   *p#* 172
Carrie reflects on the conversation with JD and Bob re: Cracker House conversation
Text: your question is interesting, because Bob, and JD and I were sitting at the break ... and
we were just talking very briefly about the conversation that we started at the table, about
"cracker vs. nigger" and the fact that, you know, now that JD better understands, just that little
bit of dialogue, he can accept that and feel, say, "OK, I see where that can be ..."

428   **HERB**   FG #2   *p#* 33-41
Story #12: Herb, the KKK & Chamb of Com; he identifies common values to resolve problem;

967   **DAVID**   FG #3   *p#*146
Engaging the Faculty in "values talk"
Text: then we start talking about, well, what's really valuable to us ... and then, from out of there,
some sense of shared values and then, whatever behaviors those shared values will start.

1179   **Researcher's Note**   LIT REVIEW Notes   *p#* 0   [Bell, 1993 #50]
Text: not mere whim or poll, rather "an authoritative interpretation of the community morality that bears
on the proper character of the community" (p.63)

2011   **PATRICIA**   Ind. INTERVIEW   *p#* 13
There are common values that shape shared meaning within the diversity of the community
Text: it has been interesting to walk the ins and outs of serving as a public official and often times
having to express values but not always in a Christian context, but in those generic values to
which I think most people in this community subscribe, whether they're Jewish or Hindu or
Buddhist or whatever ... there is in my opinion a very strong core of common values to which
this community subscribes.

2026   **PATRICIA**   Ind. INTERVIEW   *p#* 32
Dance a dance with fellow board member who often holds opposite positions
Text: We've had an interesting ... an interesting pull of philosophy with a fellow board member of mine,
who was elected the same exact time I was ... ultra, ultra, ultra conservative, way
way way way over ... and people have painted me during my first school board campaign as a
flaming liberal ... and I had always considered myself much more to the middle than an flaming
liberal, but I think in contrast to my fellow board member, we were probably the two extremes in
philosophy on the Board. Its been interesting that we've danced a dance for six and half years
and we've danced a dance and have realized that our core values are almost identical.

Appendix M

Sample Story Narratives

Story #1   Peggy (Focus Group #1):
<u>Lunch Room Conversation at her Workplace</u>

When the Anita Hill and Clarence Thompson issue arose, and I was at _____, we were having lunch, and I was sitting there with my staff. We were all female at the time. And, I started (to say), "well, did you see the news?" ...everyone started talking about what had happened. And, suddenly I shared a story about something that had happened to me, it certainly wasn't a sexual harassment thing, but I had never told anybody. And it was really about a bad experience in a work situation ... and it prompted everyone in that room to start talking about their own similar experiences. The thing that sort of impressed me at the end, was that every single person shared a story that they had never told before in that setting. These were like, you know, very hurtful things. And so we started talking about the moral issue and you know, those sides of the issue. But it was interesting that it prompted this just of sort of flow of emotion from the various people in the room."

And so, and thinking of the leadership part of it -- of course I was the boss of these people, so maybe since it was OK for me to say it, then it allowed them to start talking. I don't know if that would have happened if it were reversed. And then we got into ethics and moral issues as a result of it. From that sort of informal lunch setting, then our whole conversations changed. They didn't necessarily talk about that particular issue, but then when we met for lunch every day, or whenever we were together, we started talking about heavier issues, politics and morality. It was sort of like a catalyst to them, instead of talking about, "Did you shop at Steinmart yesterday?", or whatever, or grandchildren, ... ah, we began to talk about things on a different level.

<When asked what kind of change took place among the group, she responded: >

Well, we just began to, you know, go from, what I would consider, the workplace typical discussions, to things that were of a heavier nature ... I mean, we are told as children, you don't discuss politics or religion ... and we began to! ... and other issues ... it just changed the focus of the intensity of our discussions ... and we got into all kinds of discussions that I don't think would have happened. I am not saying necessarily that that particular conversation was the only thing that caused it to happen, but it certainly transitioned our discussions to a different level.

Story #41   Patricia (Interview)
<u>School Board Meeting</u>

I had only been on the Board about a year ... and we had dealt with a number of very, very intense issues that really impacted this community. We had desegregation, in the forefront ... we were in the thick of still dealing with some of those issues ... and we had sex education ... and in the midst of all of that, we had a sexual harassment complaint filed by three school teachers, three female school teachers against a principal. And this fellow had been with the school district just about all of his life. He was a career educator. He had grown up in the system. He had been well respected and he actually had some very close, very dear friends and mentors who were serving as members of the School Board. And, unfortunately, he was found guilty ... and as part of our job as

public officials, when that happens, we are in a situation where we actually have to dismiss him, and it's a permanent dismissal. And it says, you can no longer be an educator in the State of Florida ... or, in most instances, any place else.

So here was a fellow who had a career. He was close to retirement. He was going to lose his state retirement. He wouldn't get another job in education. Its all he had ever done. And yet, he had been found guilty of these charges. And he came before the school board that night, and his attorney pleaded his case and the board voted unanimously to dismiss him. But at the very very end, there is always an opportunity for a public official to make a comment. And one of our Board members who had mentored this fellow, made the comment that he thought that this guy was a very fine man, that he was a good honest, hard working person, had great character, and went on quite a bit praising this fellow, and that he hoped that at some point, things could change.

And I sensed great injustice with the statements that had been made to those three teachers who had had the courage to come forward with the charges, had gone through great difficulty in a school where the culture is typically "you support your principal" ... and you support your leader ... and had been somewhat ostracized by their peers, and had stayed the course ...and had really, you know, stepped up. And I looked at them, and I looked at their faces, and I thought someone has to speak up for them as well. And it was a very spontaneous, when I finished I wasn't quite sure what I had said exactly ... but, it seemed to have had such impact upon that room ... and it was a crowded room, there were 300 people in that room ... that, when I finished, there was silence ... and then you could hear the sniffling ... and I looked out ... and there were people in the audience with tears in their eyes ... and the Chair immediately gaveled a recess and said we need to take a break here and pause here before we go on with the business meeting.

And I had phone calls and letters later saying "thank you" for having the courage to speak out and support these people ... and that was a good thing to do. And, it was two years later and I got a phone call one day, and it was one of those young women. And she had actually left the State, and was teaching out of state because it had just been so difficult ... and she said, I am coming back to Jacksonville for a visit, to visit some friends, and I would love to drop by and just shake your hand and let you know how much I appreciated your standing up for me. You made my life more positive than it ever would have been by doing that. And, I think it was just one of those spontaneous things that occurred that came back later in a such an incredibly rewarding way.

I think that what I did was right a wrong ... and the wrong was the statement of support for the person that had committed the offense ... that was the wrong at that point. There was not debate over whether this fellow was guilty or not ... It was that here was a school board member who had just voted to take his job away and everything else ... but then came right back and said that he's still a great person, you know, and went on with that when ... sexual harassment is, is wrong! ... its against the law, its morally and ethically wrong! And I think it was that sense of someone stepping up and saying, "no" ... you know, the support needs to be given to these three young women who were the victims of this circumstance, and continue to be victimized by our supporting this ...

Appendix N

Forums of Moral Conversation Depicting Stories from the Database

	Arena 1 **Friends & Family**	Arena 2 **The Workplace**	Arena 3 **Civil Society**	Arena 4 **Political Bodies**
Situational Events	#3 Eric/daughter's teacher #7 Carol/daughter #17 Debbie/husband #20 Larry/sons #52 Elli/daughters #54 Patricia/Bishop	#5 Donna/Nat'l mtng #8 Eric w/Manager #9 Peggy/ Planning Mtg #10 Peggy/Grnt Eval #11 Peggy/Board mtg #24-26 Marsha/ meetings #27 David/Prncpl Mtg #28 Brian/Planning Comm #31 George/Mgmnt Mtg #32 George/Staff Mtg #34 Cindy/Staff Mtg #37 Ray/Consltants #38 & 39 Chuck at Principals Mtg #40 Chuck /Faculty Mtg #46 David/ Student Mtg	#6 Tim/SAC Mtg #12 Herb/Judge & Cham of Com #15 Jacob/Task Force on juvenile crime #18 & 45 Sarah/ Synog Mtg #19 Lisa/luncheon mtg #23 Debbie/ Jr.League #30 Joe/Homeless Coalition #47 Joe/Church congregation	#14 Elli/SchlBrd #17 Debbie/CityHall #33 Cindy/TownMtg #35/Cindy/CityCncl #36 Ryan/CityCncl #41 & 42; Patricia & School Board
Intentional Events	#55 Tim/Sun Dinners #56 Patricia & the CrazyEights	#2 Eric/Auto Assoc #48 Patricia/Staff Retr #58 Donna/Staff Mtg	#4 Fran/Stdy Circle #13 Lisa/Training Prog #16 Dan, Church Group #21 Steve, classroom #22 Jacob, Study Circle #49 Tim/Mission Grp #50 Tim/United Way Exec Dir Grp	#53 Elli & colleague #59 Patricia /School Board Retreat
Serendipitous Events	#29 Brian/ dinner party #57 Family Picnics	#1 Peggy/LunchRoom	#43 Eric/TVnewscast #44 Debbie/OJS trial #51 Sarah/Museum	Not Evident

Vitae

John W. Frank has worked in human service, educational, and religious organizations for over twenty-five years. He currently lives in Jacksonville, Florida, and is executive consultant with DiaComVentures™ (DCV), an independent research and consulting service with a mission to build community within organizational culture by unleashing the power of moral conversation. DCV reaches out to a range of organizations that can contribute to the reconstruction of community in the 21st century. These groups include civic organizations, schools, churches and religious organizations, health and human service providers, public agencies and private industry. Central themes to DCV consultation services include transformational leadership development, teambuilding, strategic planning, organizational learning, values formation, and the advancement of participatory models of decisionmaking in the workplace and democratic institutions.

# # #

Education:

2002   Ed.D., Educational Leadership, University of North Florida;

1981   M.A., Applied Theology, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California;

1972   B.A., Philosophy, St. Leo University, St. Leo, Florida;

Prior Professional Experience:

1994-99   Executive Director, Epilepsy Foundation of Northeast Florida,
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1988-93   Director, Marywood Center for Spirituality & Ministry Formation,
                  Diocese of St. Augustine, Jacksonville, Florida;

1982-88   Founder & Director, Pax Christi-Florida, Inc.,
                  Regional Branch of the International Catholic Peace Movement;

1979-82   Director of Adult Education, Blessed Sacrament Church, Alexandria, Virginia;

1974-79   Associate Director, St. Leo Abbey Retreat Center, St. Leo, Florida;