

# Authentic Leadership

## A Challenge of the Future for the Water Management Sector

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**Summary.** *Authentic Leaders will be the hope of our future development. They will be in tune with their own conscience and will be in harmony with their inner virtues, the development of their thoughts, the way they express and use their speech and their overall actions. With their insight they will be able to be trustful and inspire people to make the best, the most decent, the most honest and responsible out of themselves. They will develop an inner attitude that they cannot possess anything but that they are responsible for whatever they have and show the courage to take that responsibility serious in relation to themselves and the others. In that way they will become representatives of true freedom. True freedom means freedom of thought. This freedom will give us philosophical and spiritual wealth. Broad-mindedness, a sense of equality, and the realisation that this whole world is one family are the results of authentic, independent thinking. Independent thinking means freedom from all prejudices, superficial beliefs, and superstitious practices. Spirituality, if revived and properly restored, can save the whole world from the destructive blows of materialism. We must make up our minds to re-establish the higher values of civilisation and to start practicing that philosophy which is essential for our growth and development. In that way authentic Leaders in the Water management sector will honor the most wonderful element water in its essence, will learn from its qualities and will demonstrate the harmony of the water element qualities with their own inherent virtues and their inspiring ability to lead the others.*

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## ***Introduction***

For far too long western economies and societies have placed their focus of attention mainly on material and technological progress presuming a technological advance shown in a continually upward bending, ever accelerating curve. It seems to be the icon of our age and we have forgotten that this belief is our own creation; relentless technological progress is not a law written into the cosmos. It is a product of the way our present modern society is organized and functions. It brings new wondrous devices. But it also brings incessant frenzy, disorientation, and dependence-or at least it has throughout the Industrial Age.

The Industrial Age has been an epoch of harvesting natural and social capital to produce productive and financial capital. We have destroyed forests, topsoil, farmland, and polluted the precious element of water in many places. The loss of biological diversity has been matched by the loss of cultural diversity. Not only have one quarter of all species vanished in the past century, so too have more than half of the “2,000” or more human language systems, and with them the diversity of thought and expression that humans have developed over tens of thousands of years. The exploitation of nature, the plundering of natural resources of the Earth for corporate profits, billions of malnourished and millions of starving people, unbelievable waste of natural capital is causing species to become extinct at a faster rate than ever before. It is not new that technological advance had not always been an undiluted benefit. Yet we continue to act as if there were no possibilities of exerting any influence over it.

*The problem is not technology itself, but it's us: The creators of technology.*

We have fallen prey to the false beliefs that man can be explained from within this world. We failed to realize that the world has to be understood according to the laws and revelations of human being, as Emil Bock put it. Only if man rediscovers the human, which he lost, he can hope to unveil the ordering principles which enable him to tame the ever increasing chaos which threatens to overwhelm him.

Man can rediscover the human, if he begins to reflect upon himself in order to learn to uncover where he comes from, where he is heading, where the dimension of meaning of his worldly existence resides and where he can find his innermost core of being, his *Self*, from which he gains the power to shape and direct his life. The most important question, however, which he ought to ponder, is the question how he can become a free man from within in order to lead a life in freedom such that he enables his fellow beings a life in freedom. „ The free man is the one who wills without arbitrary self-will“ wrote Martin Buber. *“He must sacrifice his puny, unfree will that is controlled by things and instincts for his grand will, which quits defined for destined being. Then.....he listens to what is emerging from himself, to the course of being in the world...in order to bring it to reality as it desires.“*

In the same sence Goethe wrote in his poem *Secrets*: *„From the violence which is binding all beings, only that human being can free himself, who conquers himself.“*

This self-conquest can only be done by strong people who will be able to guide themselves into freedom to become authentic leaders who can guide others through their own example.

Authentic leadership in the field of water management is raising three questions.

- What is the precious water element teaching us to become authentic leaders ?
- What does authenticity mean?
- Why leadership, values-based and authentic ?

## ***What is the water element teaching us to become authentic leaders?***

Our planet earth is called the „blue planet“, because it exists with 70% out of water. Out of water developed and evolved life. As we can see with the foetus in the mothers womb 37 ° warm and salty water is the first condition under which the evolution of human life takes place. Where water exists, life can materialise, where it is missing this is not possible. A question arises: from where does water receive its lifeforce? This question needs to be contemplated not answered right now.

Water is the foundation of our lives. It is a great healer. Wherever the equilibrium of life is disturbed sickness develops and water finds it's equilibrium and only by this ability it has a healing effect. Without any effort it finds it's own way of continuous flowing, metaphorically speaking all the time creating it's own equilibrium, healing and nourishing selflessly without any demand any expectation or longing to enjoy it's own fruits of action.

Water permeates every single cell of our bodies, so it creates communication between all systems possible. Water regulates all functions of our organism. It's equilibrium is also necessary for the brain metabolism which enables our thinking process. So the equilibrium of the water metabolism influences our thoughts and emotions.

It symbolises the power of unconditional love expressed through it's selfless service to the earth and all living beings.

In 9 years of serious scientific research Dr. Masaru Emoto (Japan) proved that water seems to be a living element which is able to change it's crystals according the vibrations of words or sounds. He showed that when human beings distort the natural qualities of water like it's permanent flowing it's crystallising power starts weakening. He also showed that when we worship the waters it shows a beautiful clear crystallisation and when we pollute and contaminate the water through words or actions it loses it's strength and

lifeforce. But as soon as we are freeing water from our negative influences it goes back to it's natural beauty and strength.

In 1997 the NASA published photos of snowballs falling from space onto the earth. "This snowball is deemed to be a heavenly body similar to a small comet with a diameter of a dozen meters. About a few thousands of them come flying daily but as they come near the earth surface they decompose and become a part of cloud. Rain comes falling from space every day." Press Report 1997 of the NASA) So the thought that the quality and rythm of water flows in resonanz with the cosmos connecting the cosmos and thearth with every living being seems to be allowed.

The German philosopher Hegel wrote in his philosophie of nature: „*Water is the element of the selfless contrast, the passive being for others. It is it's determination to be the –not particular- and therefore water was early called „the Mother of all particular.“*

Summarizing the qualities of water:

- It is the foundation of all life.
- It is connecting the earth with all it's living entities and the cosmos transporting information everywhere.
- It is the living force in our bodies.
- It is pure and clear by it's nature.
- It is constantly changing and moving.

It is authentic that means: pure,clear,sincere,honest,selfless-serving,nourishing, lifesupporting,unbroken strong in permanant change.

The water element is teaching us virtues and values and by wohrshipping this element with dignity and humility we can create the preliminaries for health and strength in us which are preliminaries for the development of authenticity in our personality.

## ***What does authenticity mean ?***

### ***A Casestudy***

Jair Moggi, a consultant from Adigo Consultares in Sao Paulo Brasil, is the personal consultant of the president of the 20 waterdistricts in Sao Paulo. He told me the history of these districts and I am sharing this case in my own words:

10 years ago the water of Sao Paulo was polluted and completely contaminated. It was dangerous to drink the tapwater and the quality of the water was as bad as you could hardly imagine. As bad as the water quality were the inner attitudes of the directors of the 20 water districts. Their minds were full of greed, desires and anger and their behaviour could be simple characterised by being corrupt.

They filled their pockets with public money and prevented useful investments in new technology. Their employies were demotivated, had not much to do, were too many, and served themselves as their“Misleaders“ did, instead of serving the people.

But finally these directors showed a longing for a better life with drinkable waters they only did not know how to lead a transformational process. They thought that it may be enough to change the outer conditions and did not even think of questioning their own behaviour. So they asked a consultant who had the reputation of being integer and honest for help. After a short contemplation he agreed but only if each director would fully accept his conditions. All 20 agreed. The conditions were:

- Open accounting – no more corruption,
- Truthfulness – no more lies,
- Purification of the leading management through proper education and training,
- Purification of the waterelement through wise investment in new technologie,
- Privatization of all districts,
- Him, the consultant, becoming the president of all districts.

Everybody felt relieved and accepted the loss of personal benefit. The gain was the complete transformation of all 20 districts and in 10 years time they became profitable and healthy, the people became highly motivated and the water changed its quality, became pure, drinkable and showed a wonderful crystal structure.

In this way, the authentic leadership quality of one person, who was in harmony within himself with his *Self* was able to transform the inner attitudes of the water management personal and by that changed the quality of the water element of Sao Paulo in service of the people of that city.

This story was told by the president in front of 200 international consultants of a world congress. At the end, having described the success, he left the stage, went into the audience and bowed before Lex Bos, a consultant from the Netherlands, and declared honestly that he deserves the merits of that success because he had trained him to become authentic.

### ***Characteristics of Authenticity***

The integrity and honesty of the president in the above described case study are expressions of his authentic leadership qualities. But what are the aspects, preliminaries and preconditions of the human quality we call authentic?

### ***Creative Tension***

Authenticity is an inner attitude and an encounter attitude. It relates to the person's own inner being on one side and to the relationship of one person with others on the other side. Being authentic within oneself is a precondition to enter an authentic dialogue with others. From an ethical point of view, authenticity is the response-ability which answers the call to respond to another person's needs but this is only possible if I know my own true needs.

Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet, Act I, Scene 3 :

*“This above all: to thine own self be true  
And it must follow as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”*

So authenticity starts from within a person and is a precondition to become a true human being and a true social being. In the beginning this seems to be contrary or even conflicting. Yet it is exactly this creative tension which uniquely characterises the human. A creative tension of autonomy and interconnectedness, independence and interdependence, selfreliance and commitment, sovereignty and solidarity.

This experience clarifies the existence of two worlds, one within and one outside a human being. Discovering the inside world we discover our pure being, discovering the outside world we discover the process of becoming a person. This process of discovery may be described as being open to oneself and being open to the others, not pretending to be different nor showing a facade.

That demands from a person the ability of letting go of judgements, methods and evaluations which may have been useful in the past. One needs to develop the courage to open up towards what is happening inside and wants to emerge and to actively open up to the mystery of the other anew.

When all the systems of a personality of a person, whatever they are, are purified from the obstacles, then the core of that person, its innermost being, its essence can emerge and show itself to whom? To the others. This results in a crucial, creative tension of authenticity as a process term explaining Rudolf Steiners (founder of Antroposophy) saying : *“True Selfrealisation leads to Worldrealisation and Worldrealisation leads to Selfrealisation.”* By looking in the mirror of the world I can see myself by and looking into myself, I learn to understand the laws of the universe, which can only be experienced in total presence.

### ***Presence***

Presence is a state of being in which body, mind and feelings work as an interdependent unity. This state has an overall quality of relaxed alertness. On a purely physical level the body within Presence is grounded, the breath is rooted, and the muscles are appropriately toned, neither flat and over-relaxed nor necessarily tense.

Presence is underpinned by the faculty of awareness. Our inner landscapes of sensation, feeling, thought and imagination are noticed, and there is simultaneously a heightened perception of everything around. Self-awareness replaces self-consciousness and this gives a leader the space internally to act responsive rather than reactive.

The greater our Presence the closer we are to inspiration and intuition. Presence is an aliveness in the moment, within an overall attitude of receptivity and these qualities are the best seed-ground for insight and creativity. Paradoxically, the more open and centered we are in our bodies, the clearer and more multi-dimensional our thinking becomes and then is expressing itself in a dignified way in how we speak and what we speak. This is what being an authentic leader means. He learns to act according to and in full harmony with his thoughts, and speech, in an autonomous and responsible way.

### ***Responsibility***

Through that responsible self-study slowly a realisation dawns of who I am and a space of inner freedom opens up which is called Authenticity. Michaela Gloeckler writes in *“Spirituelle Ethik 2002”*: *“A new ethic is needed, and this ethic must be developed were the battle for humanism and being a true human happens to take place: in each and every individual person.”*

Times are over where decisions were made by a few powerful leaders. A new Ethic demands from each leader to become his or her own authentic leader in full responsibility towards him-or herself. We can still learn from authorities from all fields but then we have to learn to ask our conscience what is responsible towards my own inner being and towards the others. In that way authentic leaders become authentic human beings and enter the path of truth.

### ***Truth***

Yasuhiko Kimura, a philosopher of change, says in an interview : *“Authenticity is fundamental, more fundamental than spiritual enlightenment. Without authenticity, no genuine spiritual enlightenment is possible. Authenticity is the state of being committed to truth...Truth is simple, utterly so...And no matter how*

*simple a truth is stated, only those who have walked the path of understanding and evolution on their own can know and understand it authentically. The path of truth is the path least travelled... Authenticity is the clarity of being in which there is no self-deceit. Authenticity is a counteraction for that self-deceit and tendency to delude oneself.“*

To learn that discrimination between my true knowledge and my self-deceit tendencies, to know what I know and to know what I do not know is the most difficult task in life but this discrimination can create freedom. To sharpen that discriminative faculty one needs to have humility and authenticity with regard to the truth of the experience. So one learns to become true to oneself and again in that way vibrates that honesty and purity to the others.

To learn to relate to the others in an authentic way allows to learn to relate to the authentic parts in the others and enables them to change. The consequences are the development of spontaneous creativity in the acting person and the others. There is a deep connection between Authenticity, Spontaneity and Creativity.

### ***Spontaneity and Creativity***

To act authentically always means to act spontaneously-creatively, out of one's inner sources, guided by deep trust in the truth of the inner experiences.

Authenticity means that true human beings encounter true human beings and not copies. It means the development of spontaneity and creativity a process completely opposed to expert planned behaviour, be it in terms of contents and decisions or be it in terms of ways of how to get there, i.e. means, methods and techniques. If authenticity is what true leadership is about, the only legitimate technique (in Greek “techne” which means art) is im-mediacy-im-media-te presence (presence without media). So true authentic leadership needs the courage to allow the unknown to emerge from within in full trust of the spontaneous, creative quality which will develop in the person and in the others. Authentic leadership becomes in that way the great chance to grow in a crisis and can lead us out of the momentary chaos. The translation of the greek word crisis is: chaos and a chance to grow. It is a challenge in solidarity and autonomy and a task for every leader in business life, politics as well as in the civil

societies to become pure, honest and humble to become a selfless servant for the others that means true authentic. Once this is achieved, authenticity will be the only possibility to live as a responsible person in a globalised, confusing and technical world. Authentic persons challenge others to become authentic because they themselves are challenged by really accepting themselves as they are with all their weaknesses and all their strength and through that self-acceptance they learn to accept the others as they are.

When a person has developed that kind of authenticity the question of how to guide and lead the others arises and so the question of leadership comes forward.

### ***Why Leadership, values-based and authentic ?***

James O'Toole, the vice president of the Aspen Institut, Colorado, USA, writes in his book: „*Leading Change*“: *“Executives increasingly believe that the missing element in the buisnesses around the world- the necessary condition for long-term competitiveness-is leadership. In particular, what is proving to be singularly effective is the emerging style of values-based leadership“.*

### ***Democracy demands Sacrifice***

He describes in his book a painting of James Ensor: *“Christ’s Entry into Brussels in 1889“* from the Getty Museum in Malibu, California USA.

*There you can see a crowded street scene, a sign Vive La Sociale, people in a crowd frenched, joyfully, everybody doing his own wild stuff. A drummer drumming but nobody is marching to his beat. It’s a colourful, glorious, chaotic party and ,Ensor hints, decidedly democratic.“ Ensor depicts the demos in all it’s self-interested diversity and variety; in this parade of the people, by the people and for the people, there is no discernable beginning or end to the rowdy mass of humanity filling the streets of the Belgian capital.“*

But where is Christ the Leader? You cannot see him at the beginning. If you look closer, you can see him in the background, almost lost in a throng of revelers that threatens to engulf him. This painting raises the question that becomes more and more important in our days. *„Is leadership possible in*

*modern, complex systems, or is democratic leadership“ simply an oxymoron?“*

Does Democracy, the political and social system of our time mean everybody does what he likes to do or acts in permanently criticising his opponents, like political leaders do?

The meaning of the word Democracy is translated from the greek language : demo—the people and cratos or the sanskrit word cratu-power through fire ceremonies; power comes from the sacrifice offered in fire ceremonies. So Democracy in it's true meanig demands from the people especially from the leaders sacrifice, to make something sacred. In Democracy people come to power through sacrifice, by making their lifes sacred through surrender and selfless service to the others. Litterally Democracy means: love, serve and surrender. Gandhi once said: *“We, the leaders must represent the change we seek in the world.”* In that way trust can develop which is the obverse of hope.

### ***Trust***

The democratic ideal of leadership is the leader as a servant who has the courage to take responsibility and does not long for priviledges and wealth. Leaders often try to meet their own needs and desires. Authentic leaders lead to achieve the ends and to fulfil the needs of the people. They earn their trust by serving the others, their followers through deeds and by example. They don't ask anyone to make a sacrifice they themselves are unwilling to make. So trust grows through their integrity to always consider what is morally right, concentrating on their fundamental values.

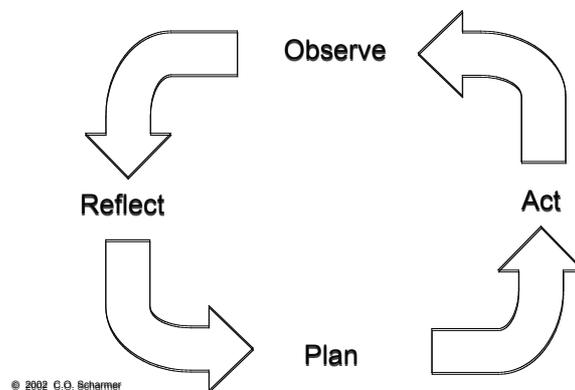
### ***Values***

Values like selfless service, being and representing what you expect from the world which means being authentic, having the courage to stick to your visions and conscience, being integer, convinced and persistent according to your inner wisdom, being trustful so that the others can trust, characterise a personality with leadership qualities so that they can lead others by listening to them, by encouraging dissenting opinions among their closest advisers, grant ample authority to their subordinates, through love and not through power, manipulation or coercion, but mainly by respecting their followers, the others.

### ***Conservative learning of values***

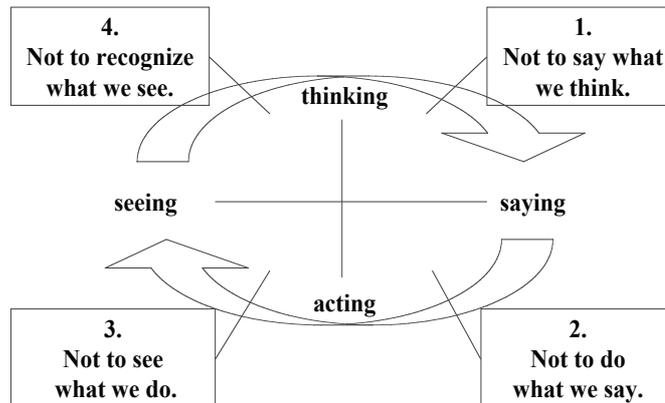
Now who comes to your mind, when you hear the word leader? Often it is not leaders with that kind of qualities. While we all know these values isn't it interesting that we hardly find them in the inner attitudes and the outer behaviour of our today's leaders and in ourselves? So it looks like that the modern leadership trainings with all its methods and techniques have proved to be not very successful if we look at the leadership behaviour in our today's crisis.

### **The Conventional Learning Cycle (Type I)**



One reason is the conservative learning cycle that we reflect on the past, analyse the past and project our results into the future. In that way we are stuck in a circle of learning impediments which are fourfold:

### Four Learning Impediments



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1. Often we are not saying what we think,
2. often we are not doing what we say,
3. often we are not seeing what we do,
4. often we are not recognizing what we see.

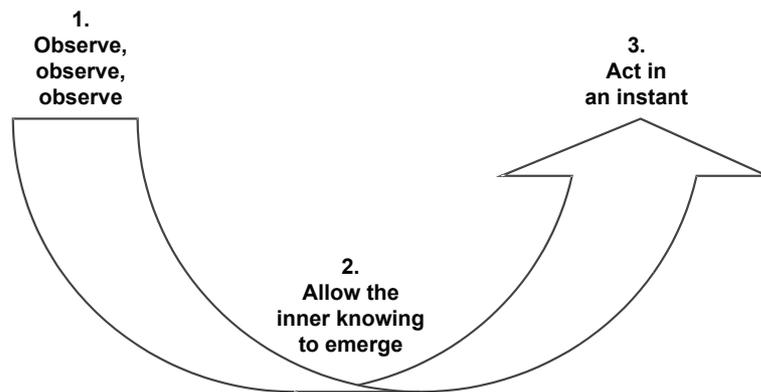
### *New learning of values*

It is time that leaders learn to step out of that system. In order to do well in an economy driven by high technology, innovation and permanent change a new learning cycle has to be developed and new core capabilities have to be trained. Dr. Otto Scharmer from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) did a research work in interviewing leading practitioners and influential thinkers in the area of creativity, high performance, and the digital economy to look for commonalities in their stunning successes. The evaluation of over a 100 interviews showed a new learning cycle and core abilities nearly all had in common:

- they were able to see reality with fresh eyes with the ability of non judgemental observing,
- they showed the capability of sensing which means tuning into emerging patterns that inform future possibilities,
- they were able to become completely still to receive an inner knowing by accessing inner sources of creativity and will,
- they were crystallizing by creating vision and intention

and they showed the power of executing by acting in an instant to capitalize on new opportunities.

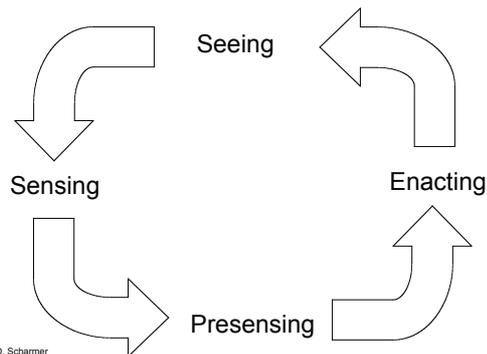
### Cognizing Emerging Futures



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The new learning cycle shows 3 major stages all interviewed leaders had in common : the ability of sensing, knowing and executing.

### The Emerging New Learning Cycle (Type II)



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## ***Sensing***

### Stage one : **Sensing**

*“When I left Harvard business Review I started meeting a whole new group of people. The basis for personal interaction was completely different: „ What are you working on that is interesting and who are you and how does it feel?“ I was seeing the world with fresh eyes. I was learning at a rapid clip, going places I had never been before, and talking with people I never would have met before. It was as though I had escaped the boundaries of a walled city.”*

Interview with Allen Webber, co-founder of Fast Company magazine.

Sensing needs an attitude of openminded receptivity and a willingness to let go of preconceptions. The more you succeed in suspending your habit of judgement about what you notice and observe, the more clearly you will see what is going on around you.

## ***Knowing***

### Stage two: **Knowing**

*“I have always felt that I should do what I was here to do. To know what that is, i have to keep asking, „What’s going on in the world?“ and „What’s important to me?“ The two questions are intertwined and can’t be answered in isolation. They are the most important questions we can ask.”*

Interview with Peter Senge, Author, The Fifth Discipline series.

In this stage the focus is shifting from the external world to the nature and organization of the internal world. Stanford Professor Michael Ray considers these to be the two key questions of creativity: „Who is my *Self* and what is my *Work*?“To answer these questions it is necessary to *Stop* all activities and to learn to become completely silent not with the lips but within the mind. Out of that stillness of the mind an inner knowing can emerge about the highest



possible future that wants to dawn in the now. A knowing of what is right to do develops develops and no choice and decision is necessary.

### ***Executing***

Stage three: **Executing**

*“Every time there were obstacles or I had no idea what would happen, something would unfold or open up.”*

Interview with Gib Myers, Mayfield Fund.

At that stage your commitment and the alignment of your vision with the larger forces shaping your world become a source of power that attracts the resources you need so the right people are attracted because of a clear idea with vision, integrity, substance and power supported by the inner attitude of respect for the people.

### ***Creative Spaces***

Scharmer found that three distinct types of spaces or knowledge creation environments support an organization's ability to anticipate and realize emerging opportunities. Total immersion promotes sensing; retreats are conducive to knowing or presensing emerging futures; and venture creation laboratories support executing. Out of these results a new leadership training can be developed that can help leaders to develop their inner capacities so that they learn to see who they are, where they are going and what they really want. With these authentic qualities they can face difficulties and crisis and by being aware of their true identity they can act instead of react and are 'causers' rather than 'caused'. By creating a creative space for stage two leaders can come in contact with three inherent capacities that shape structures and behaviours-that shape reality : the power of intention, the power of mindfulness and the power of compassion each of them in detail elaborated in the work of Scharmer.

### ***Meditative Spaces***

One of the interviewees of Scharmer was Master Nan Huai-Chin a master in Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism. He described seven meditative spaces of leadership : Awareness (of current reality); Knowing where to stop (recognizing the essential question); Calmness applying rigorous method to the essential; Deep quietness and stillness; Grace of being; True thinking (looking for the essence/answer to the question; Attainment (of the desired end).

These seven meditative spaces of leadership consist of 2 basic movements. The first movement could be called the „way-in,“which is to move from normal awareness to the deepest place of true stillness. The second movement could be called the „return“and is about the returning from the deepest point to the other levels of reality without losing the presence of the deepest point.

Out of these seven meditative spaces of leadership a complex leadership-training can be developed which cannot be understood in terms of one or two weekendseminars. This will be a process at least over one or two years involving culture.

### ***Learning from the old Scriptures***

In a slightly different way S.K. Chakraborty is taking the question of the education of authentic leadership serious. He analyses the wisdom treasures of humanity given by Rishis, wise man, since over 5000 years and asks himself how this treasure could be utilised to transform todays leaders to help them become authentic and trustful. So he compares vice with virtues and allows the reader to judge for himself which qualities he is preferring. This contemplation demonstrates that the task of leading others starts with an intense training inside the own personality. The qualities are:

#### **Virtues**

- Sacrifice
- Fearlessness
- Purity of temperament
- Giving
- Self-control

#### **Vice**

- Pride
- Arrogance
- Excessive self-esteem
- Wrath
- Harshness

- Study of scriptures
- Askesis
- Straightforwardness
- Harmlessness
- Truth
- Absence of wrath
- Self-denial
- Calm
- Absence of fault-finding
- Compassion to all
- Absence of greed
- Gentleness
- Modesty
- Freedom from restlessness
- Energy
- Forgiveness
- Patience Cleanliness
- Absence of envy and pride
- Ignorance
- Bound in a hundred bonds
- Amassing unjust games
- Egoistic
- Addicted to desires
- Selfregarding ostentation
- Hating God in himself and in man
- Cruelty

Going through a transformation process from vice to virtue it is like going through a burning fire. But fire has a purifying effect and it is time now that people who want to become leaders start taking words like synchronicity serious and develop the courage to confront themselves with that power and energy which is larger and much more powerful than the sumtotal of all the energies and capabilities of the single members of a team. Coming in contact with this“ something more“ than the sum of the parts allows true leaders to experience intuition in it's real sense which is something completely different from impulses out of the unconscious. These kind of authentic leaders don't need to motivate the others with tricks and techniques., when they have confronted themselves in a serious training with themselves will from now on highly inspire people, the others.

***Abstract***

Seminars and retreats have been developed out of the research and thoughts described above. It's not a training in methods and techniques rather an inspired Self-Mastery-Programm which will enable leaders to develop the ability of Presence and Peakperformance by learning to tap the inner sources of Truth, Trust, Spontaneity and Creativity. With that inner attitude they will deal with the element water in the water management sector and it will be in the service of the people. So the Challenge of the future for the water management sector is the education of authentic, responsible, trustful Leaders as Servants.

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