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WHITE PAPER

The Future of Civilization the 12 Liberative Concordances for the Age of ReEnlightenment

By Robert Porter Lynch – May 2019, August 2020, August 2021

Note: In 1969, Kenneth Clark wrote a book: Civilization, which was a brilliant assessment about the rise and fall of Civilizations since the Greek era. In the book, he was left betwixt and between whether human civilization was lost or whether it would rise again. Now, more than fifty years later, it is clear that humanity is becoming more and more polarized, adversarial, combative, and, essentially lost.

How do we map a way forward? This paper helps aim at addressing this question.

The most important factor shaping human existence is the goal of building a community of free and happy human beings who, by constant endeavor, strive to liberate themselves from the inheritance of anti-social and destructive instincts. – Albert Einstein

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Part One: How did things get this way? What can we do about it?

As I was lamenting the fire in the Notre Dame Cathedral in the Spring of 2019, I reflected back on the two Easter Sundays I spent in that venerable temple several years ago. With sadness I thought of the 2000 years of Christianity and the untold hours of priests, ministers, nuns, monks and committed souls who have preached and prayed for a better world.

Why hasn't it materialized?

With a minister friend, I shared the question; he commented that too often the Christian community wore the mask of love one another, collaboration, and community, but underneath defined themselves adversarially – Protestants versus Catholics, Jesuits versus Dominicans, Synod versus Synod...

Retrospectively, this certainly looks like foolishness.

Together with my friend we conjectured: “What If” over a millennia ago, the Christian Community had formed an alliance uniting Christian sects to design a “collaborative socio-economic community,” seeking sought to *elevate the divinity of the human soul in a Christian community* (socio-economic-political) on earth today, instead of waiting for salvation in heaven?

Some of the breakthroughs in collaboration we are designing today could have had a “head start” commencing in the Roman era – taking the trajectory of the Greeks with Plato and Aristotle as the lead “cultural arrow” -- to form a world that would be far more rational, trustworthy, and collaborative than it is now in the 21st century.

Similarly, my friend and I speculated “what if” the Age of the Enlightenment had not stalled out in the early 19th century? What would our revered educational institutions have done?

A retrospective on the institutions of higher education, particularly our universities, yielded equally disappointing insights.

“Colliberative” Education & 12 Concordances

Never did our best schools of higher learning set as their “quest” to have all their departments, deans, professors, and graduating PhD’s jointly aim at *elevating the dignity of the human spirit* by building a *collaboratively excellent civilization* (either picking up on Einstein’s observation, or extending the line of progress of socio-technical-innovative capacity started by the Greeks). (see [How the Greeks Created the First Age of Innovation](#))

The two institutions on the planet -- Religion & Education -- that *should have* discovered, developed, researched, tested, and prescribed such a method, system or architecture for Collaborative Excellence failed to address this most fundamental quest -- WHY?

They got caught in thinking too small, ever alert to protecting their fiefdoms, never addressing the over-arching central issue of human existence as (what should have been) their most important mission.

Their self-imposed, self-constrictive human and organizational dynamics prevented such breakthroughs in thinking to be realized.

We are all aware of how this failure has left today’s world filled with haves and have-nots, wealth and poverty, heroic materialism, polarization, chaos and despair. More and more children are born fatherless, out of wedlock, family-less, and destined for oblivion and devoid of hope for their future.

As a society, we’ve addressed technical solutions that put a man on the moon fifty years ago, and a computer in every hand, but we cannot develop responsible, trustworthy leaders to guide us, nor can we graduate students from our high schools with the capacity to be great parents, great friends, great teammates, and great future leaders.

What if our forbearers had not gotten entrapped in such small thinking?
Is it too late to reinvigorate such ideals and ideas?

Of course not!

It’s wasted energy to rant and rave about the past; rather: lay the past behind as just a bitter memory and reach forth into the future for a new beginning.

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It is now time for a *shift* -- with new thinking, new strategies, new focus, a magnanimous quest -- aimed at bringing forth a new vision, a new design architecture, real possibilities, and concrete practices that will turn the tide before time runs out. (see our [Collaborative Excellence White Paper](#) about how this can be done.)

This will require an alliance of spirited champions and committed leaders for the quest to become reality. The future of civilization is dependent upon our commitment to a renewal of vision, of energy, of values, and of trust.

The quest must fuse science, humanity, and environment, while engaging in a prospering economy that satisfies human quality of life.

The alternative – staying the course in this storm – is bleak.

The choice depends upon our resolution to create a bright and better future.

Choose now and choose well, before the potential of a bright future dims as it gets farther and farther beyond our grasp.

Can the Centre Hold?

Today people feel like things are spinning out of control -- the “centre” is not holding; our anchor to windward is losing its grasp in the storm; people feel rudderless; our dynamos spin faster and faster toward a seeming oblivion.

Chaotic and adversarial leadership is gaining more and more ground across the globe.

Trust in our most cherished institutions is collapsing (see White Paper #1)

It is our responsibility to turn the tide.

We must be accountable – our poor leadership created the fertile ground that nurtured and grew the leaders we have today.

This is actually not a new phenomenon – we have had seen this problem expanding its realm for a hundred years, accelerating in the last half century.

Kenneth Clark, in closing his work on Civilization (1969) quoted the prophetic words of William Butler Yeats (who Clark regarded as one of the great geniuses of his time – writing in 1919, following the horrors of the First World War):

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre.....
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand!

Clark, writing 50 years after Yeats, then proposed this somber insight:

“The trouble is that there is still no centre. The moral and intellectual failure of Marxism has left us with no alternative to heroic materialism ... One may be optimistic, but one can’t exactly be joyful at the prospect before us.”

Now we stand, nearly 100 years after Yeats and 50 after Clark, and there is still no centre.

The fall of Communism and the mediocrity of Socialism has left Capitalism standing solitary on a hollow heroic pedestal; Wall Street its self-appointed, flawed prophet.

Let me not pretend that Collaborative Excellence is the Second Coming – that would be demagoguery. But perhaps, in our limited time left on this earth, that Collaborative Excellence can be a solid foundation to establish a “Centre of Gravity” for our age – a centre that will prevent the ship of humanity from capsizing in storms of disillusionment and adversity.

“Western civilization has been a series of rebirths. Surely this should give us confidence in ourselves,” was Clark’s insight.

We are suggesting a “Rebirth of the Age of Enlightenment” – an [Age of ReEnlightenment](#) – resurrecting the wisdom from which our Founding Father’s high standards of human excellence emerged -- a continuum of thinking from those wise

"enlightened realists" to generate a new, compelling, multi-dimensional vision of humanity (not some New Age hocus-pocus, but something that is simultaneously enlightened and realistic/practical to be sustained for generations to come).

Time seems dangerously short. Currently (as documented in Distrust in America) many of our institutions are suffering and on the verge of disintegration. People are losing their faith in democracy itself; this means people have lost faith in its leaders. Any shift to a higher order must embrace a vanguard of higher leadership standards.

Concordances of Liberative Learning

A powerful *philosophic framework* is essential for any change in educational strategies and methodologies is needed to support an *Age of ReEnlightenment*

The word “philosophy” means the “love of wisdom.”

The wisdom of Colliberative Learning is that it aims to create synergistic union of ideas, actions, and results.

We propose a set of Concordances aim to enable the liberation of the Mind, Body, and Spirit to be free of archaic paradigms that have limited humanity.

Problem with Distrusted Leaders

Many adult professionals turn to University to gain new insights and abilities to advance their careers do not realize they are entering into an environment that has unwittingly sub-optimized its ability to produce great results. This may come as a surprise, especially because some of the world’s greatest universities produce what are considered excellent programs.

However, the results in the field of action tell a story of failed leadership and distrust. In democracies, the citizenry cannot recognize leaders of poor moral character, thus becoming co-dependent enablers of despots.

The evidence is everywhere. Trust in civilian institutions has plummeted dramatically over the last five decades. People don’t trust institutions because they don’t trust its leaders.

And worse, nearly three-quarters of Millennials, the progeny of this era, are chronic distrusters, the highest rate of any adult age category. Distrust is not benign, it is destructive, corrosive, and opens the avenue for collapse of institutions.

“Colliberative” Education & 12 Concordances

Liberty is not anarchy, nor is it the freedom to do anything one pleases to satisfy a self-centered whim.

Liberty is the freedom to focus on the most important things in life, the values that make life worth living, the principles that elevate the dignity of the human spirit, the possibility to grow to one’s real potential, and the fortitude to build a community – however large or small – that continues the upward progression of one’s personal life and the larger civilization one lives in.

Each of the ***Twelve Liberative Concordances*** are intended to work interactively, as a “Guidance System,” much like the brain coordinates the organs, aligning, balancing, and integrating the requirements of the human body to function efficiently and synergistically. (in other words, the listing below is not reflective of priority order).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. the Science of Rationality, | 7. the Alliance of Community, |
| 2. the Conscience of Morality, | 8. the Elegance of Possibility, |
| 3. the Nascence of Creativity, | 9. the Governance of Criticality, |
| 4. the Luminance of Sagacity, | 10. the Temperance of Emotionality, |
| 5. the Radiance of Fidelity, | 11. the Transcendence of Humanity, and |
| 6. the Reverence of Divinity, | 12. the Potence of Pro-Activity. |

(see [**Part Two: The Twelve Liberative Concordances**](#) for more detail).

These ***Twelve Concordances*** are “principles” not laws. Thus they work together, interactively and synergistically to create the foundational underlayment for attaining Collaborative Excellence first in the mind of individuals, and second in the culture of organizations.

The ***Concordances of Liberty*** reaffirm the philosophy of an earlier age, but reflect the evolution of social, economic, and political shifts in the last two hundred and fifty years, embracing the importance of people working together, building together, creating together, and solving problems together to continue the upward progression of civilization.

By imbedding the wisdom of these Concordances into Action-Learning in Executive Development, we bridge the classical gap between the *values-based* liberal arts education and the *value-creating* functionality of professional training.

What’s more, the 12 Concordances of Liberty enable a collaborative and trustworthy culture to provide several key benefits:

“Colliberative” Education & 12 Concordances

- lifting the ethical standards for professional conduct,
- catalyzing new co-creative thinking to break “paradigm blockage,”
- unifying people to act in concordance and consensus,
- gaining competitive advantage from collaborative excellence, while
- enabling professions to function far more effectively.

Concordance means to “be of one mind,” to “unite as one.”

Thus a Concordance of Liberty both frees and unites the mind, the soul, and the community.

The Age of Enlightenment from the 17th & 18th Centuries was based on
Four Essential Principles:

1. Rationality – Reason is the key to Human Thinking, not Emotions or Self Interest
2. Progression – Civilization must be on an upward journey constantly improving
3. Natural Law – the Creator of the Universe (God) established moral laws for humans
4. Quest for Humanity – Humans must perfect flaws that have destroyed civilizations

These Four Principles are expanded into the 12 Concordances of Liberty
(Colliberative) Education that follows.

Part Two: The Twelve Liberative Concordances

The ideas and ideals of liberty were carefully cultivated in the gardens of the Hellenistic Golden Age in Greece and the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century. America’s Founding Fathers were at the forefront of that field of energy to build a foundation for a democracy that would spawn economic growth, social justice, and reasonable harmony among diverse people and often competing interests.

In that grand spirit of liberty, the *Twelve Liberative Concordances* are offered to continue the evolutionary voyage of the Age of Enlightenment. The *Twelve Concordances* aim to enable the liberation of the Mind, Body, and Spirit to be free of archaic paradigms that have limited humanity.

Liberty is not like a swamp where things stagnate and rot, but rather a river, with reasonable boundaries where water can flow freely with purpose and direction, and be harnessed to create power, transport things, grow life, and even be used for recreation and pleasure.

Liberty is the freedom to focus on the most important things in life, the values that make life worth living, the principles that elevate the dignity of the human spirit, the possibility to grow to one’s real potential, and the fortitude to build a community – however large or small – that continues the upward progression of civilization.

The efforts during the Age of Enlightenment were a product of the times: when monarchies reigned and individual rights were trodden regularly. The *Twelve Concordances of Liberty* are intended to boost the Enlightenment’s ideals into the twenty-first century, with an emphasis on community and collaboration, on integrating across differentials in thinking – *e pluribus unum* -- and to align and balance individual *rights* with social *responsibilities*.

The *Twelve Concordances of Liberty* reaffirm the philosophy of an earlier age, but reflect the evolution of social, economic, and political shifts in the last two hundred and fifty years, acknowledging the dissolution of family and community in the modern age, embracing the importance of people working together, building together, creating together, and solving problems together to continue the upward progression of civilization.

“Colliberative” Education & 12 Concordances

Each of the *Twelve Liberative Concordances* are intended to work interactively, as a “system,” much like the organs in the human body (in other words, the listing below is not reflective of priority order).

- | | |
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| 1. the Science of Rationality, | 7. the Alliance of Community, |
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Principles not Laws

These *Twelve Concordances* are “principles” not laws. In other words, they work together, interactively and synergistically to create the foundational underlayment for Collaborative Excellence. One principle does not necessarily override the others.

The principles are the framework of a “collaborative belief & mindset” that will help leaders, managers, supervisors, and administrators build stronger teams, unify and focus human energy, and open the pathway to sustainable progress, no matter what the subject, objective, or problem.

By imbedding the wisdom of these *Concordances* into Action-Learning in Executive Development, we bridge the classical gap between the *values-based* liberal arts education and the *value-creating* functionality of professional training. What’s more, the *12 Concordances of Liberty* enable a collaborative and trustworthy culture to provide several key benefits:

- lifting the ethical standards for professional conduct,
- catalyzing new co-creative thinking to break “paradigm blockage”
- unifying people to act collaboratively and build consensus
- gaining competitive advantage from collaborative excellence, while
- enabling professions to function far more effectively.

Think of a Colliberative Education as a highly tuned and effective operating system in a computer that enables applications to run faster, more effectively, and produce integrated results.

1. the Science of Rationality

What is the nature of humanity? The Greeks raised this question, which was also central to the thinkers of the Age of Enlightenment, which was also called the Age of Reason. The hallmark of a civilized person is that they are not slaves to their most debased passions, such as lust, anger, revenge, or retribution. Rather, humans must engage in a conscious effort to access their logical,¹ rational thinking.

This principle became the driving force behind the Greek creation of science, where challenging inquiry, search for root cause, data-driven analysis, and use of logic was essential to development of the first theories of mathematics, biology, astronomy, and physics.

The Age of the Enlightenment used the Greek method as a platform for the massive scientific breakthroughs of Galileo, Newton, and Watt, among many others. Each scientific breakthrough then opens the pathway for technological advances to take advantage of the new science.

Today, belief in science, the scientific method, and the use of reason is being challenged, often with disastrous results, as the U.S. response to the Corona virus illustrated.

However, science and rationality, taken solely and predominantly, without the other concordances, can destroy joy of life, eliminate the exhilaration of love, undermine the unification of trust, paralyze the creative ability to see paradoxes in reality, and obliterate the power of higher order possibilities.

For example, at the outset of WWII, most believed that Negroes were incapable of flying fighter planes. There was no evidence they had the skills, intellect, courage, or coordination necessary to be combat pilots. However, some believed blacks would make excellent pilots. The P-51 Mustang “red tails” proved they were exemplary pilots, flying over 1500 combat missions.

¹ The Greek term *Logos* meant the search for deeper, inner truth, the logical progression of root cause, the use of rational thinking in place of reactive, unreasonable emotions.

2. the Conscience of Morality

Sustainable collaboration requires a moral compass to navigate the churning waters of constant change. Having a “conscience” means one is bound to ethical behavior, hold up standards of interaction that continually balances one’s self-interest with mutual-interest and the greater good.

People without scruples are incapable of honoring others, and will thus destroy any spirit or capacity for working together. The origins of morality again extend back to the ancient times, and are embraced in America’s Greco-Judeo-Christian heritage.

Thomas Jefferson expounded upon this theme extensively in his writings about moral principles being the foundation of a democratic system of governance. All the pre-Revolutionary colleges in America made moral character development an essential pillar of their mission. The ideals of virtue, morality, and conscience became the essence of a liberal arts education.

“Your education is wasted if you do not develop morally; if you do not acquire the moral courage to take some position and stand on it – to call what is right and wrong and take the consequences. ... throughout life you will be faced by uncertainties...It is a manifestation of maturity of character to face with steadfastness and with courage the hazards which are part of life itself.”²

When someone speaks about the “soul of a nation,” the central themes are about conscience and morality in a community. Having a sense of what’s right or wrong -- what’s in the interest of the “greater good” -- is essential for unifying people into an aligned effort.

However, taken to an extreme, and without the other principles, a manipulative leader can take the ideal of the “greater good” as the rationale for genocide, as was the case with dictators like Adolf Hitler and Mao Tse Tung.

Thus, there are two corollaries to the Conscience of Morality, which recognize immorality:

² Wriston, Henry Merritt; *Character in Action*, speech to students at Brown University, September 1941

- *Cognizance of Villainy*: Evil and Criminality exists in this world. To believe that everyone is nice, caring, and beneficent is to set the stage for catastrophe
- *Vigilance of Inequity & Iniquity*: Being ever alert when things are out of balance, breaching the rules of fair play, subjugating one over another without justice. Unchecked, these often lead to criminality, base injustice, and other misdeeds.

3. the Nascence of Creativity

The nascence, or birth of creation is the beginning of the progression of understanding, the commencement of new beliefs, the dawn of evolving perceptions, and the genesis of integrating complex parts into a systematic whole.

Creativity, whether it be centered in the individual or focused on the interactive co-creation of a team of innovators, is a preeminent quality of the dignity of the human spirit. As humans, our capacity to create enables to us to move forward, to regenerate, to revitalize, and to transcend.

Our ability to create, especially our capacity to co-create our world with others, is part of the grand design of life itself. In reality, we don't live our lives, we create our lives, we design our world, and we find meaning, mission, and purpose in life.

People have asked the question for ages: “What is the meaning of life?” The answer is actually imbedded in the question: “To find meaning in life.” This is not an abstract journey, it is a very personal one. It starts by finding our own purpose and mission in life, which is a search within ourselves. This search can only reach fruition if we enable our own “renascence” – a “regenascence” – to be born again at a higher level, at which we search for our own personal mission and purpose in life, for without mission and purpose, we are aimless, listless, and often depressed.

Depression is at the pandemic level in life in the modern world. It spurs drug abuse in a futile attempt to alleviate the emptiness. But how many people who have a sense of mission and purpose are depressed?

Thomas Edison made the distinction between discovering (uncovering) something that has been hidden and finally revealed (such as a new scientific truth); and invention, which is the creation of something new.

Whether someone searches within and “finds” meaning, or one rummages within and “creates” meaning, in the final analysis these are just two sides of the same coin.

There have been times in the course of civilization when creativity flourished, such as the Greek Golden Age, the Renaissance, and thereafter. However, the Dark Ages were a time when new ideas, new institutions, and new collaborations were severely limited by a culture that did not cherish the imagination and ingenuity of the human spirit.

Like the other principles, creativity is a double-edged: can be used to build and destroy. So too it must be used in conjunction with the other principles, to be used collaboratively as a wellspring for the good of humanity.

4. the Luminance of Sagacity

Knowledge in the world of the internet is a commodity, but the inner light of sagacity – wisdom: integrating the mind, body, and spirit – is probably the most overlooked and undervalued quality of today’s human existence. The Greeks revered wisdom to the extent that they named it with a god: Sophia, which was also the name of the Holy Spirit in ancient religion.

Wisdom used to be taught in grade schools and college; it was the central theme of the study of rhetoric – one of the key element of education up until the turn of the century.

Wisdom implies one has knowledge which is grounded in experience, plus a keen sensitivity to the nature of human behavior, along with an ethical foundation, coupled with a compassion for one’s emotional state. A sagacious person typically embraces their world holistically first, then analytically, with a keen sense of perception of the multitude of dynamics that may be affecting someone’s behavior.

In this sense, the wise, sagacious person has a palpable radiance that originates from their natural integration of multiple insights along with a propensity to know what to say, how to listen, what questions to ask, when to wait, when candor is appropriate, and when to act.

The classic quote from the Gospel of John (8:32) “the truth shall set you free” is actually a set of enigmas:

In the hands of a fool: *truth is denied*; a knave: *twisted*; a genius without common sense: *unrealistic*; a criminal: *perverted*; and a sage: *enlivened through wisdom*.

Truth without wisdom is like a large marching drum, pounding out noise but hollow within.

Truth enlarges with depth, insight, expansiveness, compassion, meaning, colour, dimensionality, and discernment when it becomes a partner in the symphony of wisdom.

Truth for humans is never really absolute – it’s an unfolding, a series of revelations at we continually discover its nuances, a quest that never really ends.

5. the Radiance of Fidelity

Fidelity, from the Latin *fidelis*, means to be faithful, trustworthy, true and honest. When these qualities manifest, the possibility of collaborative impact jump dramatically. One can quickly sense the energy – like a radiance -- in the group, among the team, or the way people have a sense of common unity – community.

Distrust is one of the most destructive and corrosive of emotions, for it breaks the bonds between humans and causes despair, depression, and divisiveness.

The qualities of fidelity or trust can best be expressed with the **FARTHEST** acronym.

- **F**airness -- which insures equitability and reciprocity
- **A**ccountability -- which is the external display of internal integrity
- **R**espect for others -- which, in advanced form, becomes empathy
- **T**ruthfulness -- which requires solid commitment to be honest in your word
- **H**onourable Purpose -- which entails devotion to doing the best thing for the right reasons
- **E**thics & Excellence -- which promises doing the morally right thing with the highest standard
- **S**afety & Security -- which ensures your partner is physically safe and financially secure
- **T**ransparency & Openness -- which empowers your motives to be clear, noble, and obvious to others

When the FARTHEST qualities manifest *together* in the daily affairs of life, one becomes a far better partner, friend, teammate ...

- First, by becoming *consistent* and *predictable* -- critical qualities to maintain the stability of trust.
- Second, by adherence to these principles one is enabled to live in *integrity* -- their *words* match their *actions* -- they under-promise and over-deliver, thus honouring themselves and being whole.
- Third, by having a full commitment to the **FARTHEST** principles, a person knows they can indeed *trust themselves*, providing a pathway to a *healthy self-respect*.
- Fourth, by being able to *trust fully*, partners can *love fully*, without reservation or concern about risk.
- Fifth, by unifying the **FARTHEST** trust elements, one is empowered to have *courage* -- that heartfelt willingness to put oneself in the face of danger or stand strong for the honor of their partner, to overcome injustice, inequity, and provide security for others. Courage is *overcoming fear* because caring about others is more cherished than self-interest.
- Sixth, by holding a holistic, interconnected approach to trust *creativity is triggered* by taking away fears and worries of betrayal, thus letting the mind expand into imaginative realms, spurring innovation and new possibilities.
- Seventh, by enabling deep trust, a strong, stalwart, positive *response to adversity* comes to bear, while acting as a powerful buffer to limit conflict and reduce stress in relationships, and averting the darkness of despair.

6. the Reverence of Divinity

Humanity has demonstrated a very wide spectrum of responses to adversity, from the bestial to the divine. Evidence has verified that most humans can be triggered to act in accordance with their values, beliefs, and culture.

In cultures where leaders emphasize self-centeredness, egotism, demonizing differences, glorification of personal power, fearmongering, and demagoguery, people will have a strong tendency to be angry, fearful, distrusting, and blaming of others. Under stress this will quickly degenerate into divisiveness, conflict, aggression, and even genocide – the “beast” in our most primitive psyche manifesting itself. Nazi Germany was a good example of how a culture could bring out the worst in people.

At the other end of the spectrum are our highest, most beneficent qualities: caring, love, community building, embracing others, tolerating differences, working together, protecting each other from harm, and striving to attain a virtuous life, to name a few of are “divine” qualities.

A reverence for the divine respects the highest and most honorable qualities in both ourselves and in every normal human, supporting the soulful nature of the human spiritual devotion. In no way does this elevate our humanity to the status of being “gods,” it humbly acknowledges our human frailties and fallibilities on the one hand, and our most admirable values and virtues on the other, exalting the profound over the profane.

The Reverence for the Divine enables us to have faith when we seem lost, to see the best in others when their less than stellar qualities are boiling to the surface.

While it may be difficult for some to acknowledge the existence or presence of God in our world, most people sense a spiritual quality or nature to our lives and desire to seek it – although most don’t know how or where to look. Most religions acknowledge, and some fortify, the essence of a “holy spirit” – our “better angels” in our dealings with ourselves and others. This spiritual essence is in our souls and conscience; we just have to listen to her quite voice. And that voice as always been from ancient times until now, the voice of love, wisdom, creation, and fidelity.

Like other qualities, seeking the divine in humans must be exercised with a modicum of caution, for there are humans – Narcissists, Machiavellians, Sadists and Psychopaths – whose character borders on or goes over the edge into criminal insanity. For anyone to fail to see this inner evil, or to believe that there is good in everyone, is to expose oneself and others to brutal attack and even destruction. Such is the case of people, who, even today, believe that Adolf Hitler “just lacked having the light shine on his soul.” While there may be some

esoteric abstract truth in this statement, such a belief would not have changed the course of history and Hitler’s horrible desecration of human life.

7. the Alliance of Community

One of the great hallmarks of the vigorous civilizations has been their ability to build communities – common unities – of vision, purpose, and values that generated synergies between diverse skills, capabilities, and interests.

For example, the progress of civilization for the last three hundred years might be viewed three dimensionally through a socio-economic-political set of lenses.

Socially, the shifts from the reign of kings to self-determined democracies, coupled with the dissolution of the caste system of privilege and equal rights has created a broader alliance among all people’s regardless of race, religion, or sex. Recent efforts to tear down these cherished achievements are highly regressive and dangerous.

Economically, the specialized division of labor is not really divisive, it is synergistic, enabling each human a reasonable chance to use their unique skills to the maximum advantage. Fair trade laws eliminating monopolistic behavior spawned massive innovation, opportunity, and economic growth.

Politically, democracies have enabled the formation of more cohesive neighborhoods, stronger cities, states, and national governments. The collaboration between each of these entities, when used in a non-partisan manner, great massive economies of scale along with alignment of interests to produce better health, housing, stable growth, and protection against enemies. When partisan politics become overbearing and alliances are formed pitting interests against each other contrary to the vision of community, the results can be highly destructive. The American Civil War is a perfect case in point.

Collaborative Excellence is highly dependent upon our ability create synergistic action to build communities, trustworthy alliances, families, governments, and businesses.

8. the Elegance of Possibility

Something that is “elegant” confers an elevation of grace, an artful majesty, and a simple dignity upon something from, setting it apart from the mundane, the vulgar, the tawdry or the flamboyant.

Possibility is, in its most basic sense, and act of creation. The possibility of good things happening creates openings, enables finding solutions, going past normal limits, shifting paradigms, seeking the highest outcomes and the best destinies.

Possibility is the generation of opportunity, the willingness to frame even the harshest of realities with an artist’s palette of potential colors and combinations. Possibility gives us the freedom to think, act, and feel like a bird on the wind; to breathe the air of the Holy Spirit.

Possibility is one of the enablers giving us robustness and stamina to move through adversity. Possibility creates options, so if one thing doesn’t work, another will. So too it frees our mind to think creatively, conceive alliances to share resources, and find opportunity underneath every problem.

With the openings possibility creates, one is more prone to take pro-active initiative, thus producing more energy, increased chances of alignment among diverse interests, and more innovation. These factors aid in cultivating unique capabilities, such as enhanced foresight and synergistic solutions.

vigor and glory enabling us to develop the foresight to see around corners and break the invisible bonds of paradigms, to test and then develop new mindsets, solution sets, skillsets, and toolsets to make the world a better place than one found it.

As every principle has a negative swath when used to bludgeon, so too with *Possibility*. For example, every courtroom criminal lawyer will raise the question: “Is it possible that ‘such and so’ could have happened?” just to raise doubt in people’s minds. This technique is also used by manipulators to deflect or redirect attention to something obscure, obtuse, or even outrageous: “I don’t know who hacked the emails; certainly it’s possible that some 400 pound gorilla in Hoboken did it.”

9. the Governance of Criticality

Science directs us to view the world with a critical eye, to doubt, to analyze, to find holes and assess weakness. Certain other professions are inherent distrusters – lawyers, police, and accountants, who rely on evidence, facts, and hard realities when they engage in due diligence.

Seeking truth is a noble quest; one that must always be preeminent. We must ask “why?” We must seek underlying reason and root causes to spur deeper thinking. These all create doubt and uncertainty in the pursuit of more profound meaning. To this extent, criticality is a positive attribute.

The “governance” dimension requires us to regulate how far critical thinking is used to delve so that we don’t inadvertently tear down, demean, subjugate, divide. Criticality needs modulating to avoid turning possibility sour. Anyone can find fault with any human being. A person attached to doubt without pursuing deep truth becomes a horrible cynic. And worse, deep doubt fractures friendships and divides those who should be united and aligned. Taken to extreme, criticality becomes self-righteous poison in a toxic cup.

Great wisdom so often commences in doubt and ends in belief. Ironically, those who begin in unquestioned belief often terminate in insurmountable doubt.

Like “power,” doubt is, by its nature, neither positive nor negative, neither good nor bad. That which begins in doubt can take alternate paths:

If doubt is the stream feeding cynicism and anger, then doubt spirals into the destroyer of healthy beliefs and undermines new possibilities for growth and learning.

However, if doubt fuels healthy skepticism, the search for truth, deeper inquiry, analysis followed by synthesis – the joining of ideas -- then doubt becomes the divine source and spur of great wisdom, new levels of insight, discovery and creation.

The art of wisdom enables one to regulate the flow and interplay of faith and doubt. For in the end, without the sovereignty of deep faith and the dominion of core values, the oppression of doubt and the tyranny of cynicism will reign in a kingdom of darkness.

Emotions are not dangerous until they degenerate into negative extreme where we no longer control our response to what we feel. Listen not just to emotions but the other concordances to prevent passions like anger spiraling into viciousness which engulfs the void not filled by virtue and other finer values. Passion cannot see beyond its nose; reason sees over the horizon and around corners. And creativity enables us to “invent” our positive emotions, which our imagination then makes our new reality, our renewed experiences.

Modern psychologists are trained to have us get in touch with our feelings. Supposedly this is therapeutic. Again, moderation is in order, for if we simply become our emotions, none of the other eleven concordances seem relevant and life becomes a bowl of emotional spaghetti.

*When angry, count ten before you speak,
if very angry, count to a hundred. – Thomas Jefferson*

11. the Transcendence of Humanity

Humanity is certainly not fixed in stone. As a species we are capable of the some of the highest and lowest in what we believe, perceive, conceive, achieve, and receive.

History documents the vast range of human behavior in vivid color, but nearly never identifies the root causes of stellar behavior, and all too often imputes the cause of aberrant behavior as the outcome of adverse conditions. Psychology, on the other hand, typically ascribes bad behavior to abnormal mental causes. But what neither history nor psychology adequately addresses is the cause of greatness, the elevation of the dignity of the human spirit to sometimes extraordinary levels. Some call this “godlike,” others give credit to the sacred in our soul, still others impute good character as the cause.


One of history’s hidden lessons is that across the ages, some civilizations have proven to be transcendent, such as what happened in ancient Greece, or with the founding of the United States of America. Others, such as the Dark Ages or Nazi Germany have descended into a dismal abyss. Culture, not personality, is the primary determinant of human behavior. And leadership is the primary determinant of culture.

The word *transcendence* means to *cross over or beyond* (trans) *to a higher level* (ascend), to bring out the best in something, often coupled with a *transformation* (change form).

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Thus, while individual transcendence is certainly possible, it is more likely to occur in greater numbers in a supportive environment that nurtures higher-order thought and action. In other words, attainment of the transcendence of humanity is both an individual choice and a leadership aspiration. Aspirational leadership need not be as grandiose as changing a country. It can happen in families, communities and even sports teams. Two recent back-to-back interviews of the captain of a second year player of a ranking sports team reflected the transcendent spirit:

“I want to be able to use my experience, my wisdom and pass it along to the younger generations. I want to encourage. I want to uplift my teammates and empower them to go and do even greater things than I’ve been able to accomplish professionally. So, I’m extremely excited and humbled that I have this opportunity. And I hope that [the rest of the team] feels like I was someone that was in their corner, encouraged them and pushed them to be greater. I’m happy to serve. I’m happy to be here. I’m thankful, I still feel like I have to earn my way and earn the trust of my teammates. That starts with hard work, but that also starts with showing them that I care about them as men and I care about the trajectory of their lives moving forward beyond the game of football.”

“It’s always been bigger than me. It’s always been bigger than football.... Why? My Family. Through the saddest of times and best of times, we stuck together through it all. To this day, when [bad stuff happens], we process those emotions. We discuss those emotions but we never bask in them. We adjust and come back stronger than we left.... uplifting one another because at some point in life, it gets rough. You won’t always be upbeat and happy. You’ll have your days when the world seems to weigh on you. But as long as you have a supportive circle, I promise you, you can make it through. With everything going on in today’s world, it’s imperative we spread love and uplift one another. Build each other up. It’s bigger than me. It’s bigger than football .³

The Transcendence of Humanity highlights our ability to rise to higher levels, to act morally and ethically, to be more than their most base animal instincts. What’s most important to understand about the Transcendence of Humanity is that greatness and pettiness, magnanimity and selfishness, inspiration and desperation are all hard-wired into the nature of human nature.

As humans, we are “wired” to think and act in three distinctive “archetypal” behavior patterns; they are built into the DNA of human cultures all over the globe: *Adversarial*,

³ Comments by Team Captain Mathew Slater and Isaiah Wynn, www.patspulpit.com, week of August 2, 2020, in two seemingly unrelated stories.

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Transactional, and *Collaborative*. These are archetypal because they can be observed as far back into the recorded history of humankind. Each of these archetypes has a design to it that has evolved over several millennia into specific strategies, processes, and actions that produce highly predictable results. While these three are universal across all cultures everywhere on the globe, there are unique variances that derive from local adaptation. Everyone has experienced these three archetypes in their daily lives. (Just recall how you respond to situations in your daily life.) Understanding the power the three archetypes have on leadership, culture, and economics is essential for the collaborative shift to occur.

Importantly, these three are all-to-often interacting simultaneously in organizations in highly dysfunctional ways: what we called “muddling.” We focus on the collaborative archetype because it has the greatest positive impact on performance in a fast moving, rapidly changing world.



Here’s what the three archetypes look like in summary:

ADVERSARIAL:

- Always Take Advantage
- Manipulation, Distrust
- Win-Lose, Dog Eat Dog
- Survival of Fittest
- Might makes Right
- My Way or the Highway
- He who has the gold, RULES!
- What’s Mine is MINE,
What’s Yours is Negotiable

TRANSACTIONAL:

- Everything’s a “Deal”
- Quid Pro Quo, Trade
- Buy Low - Sell High
- Almighty Self Interest
- Tactical Transactions
- Price, Price, Price
- Hierarchical Power
- Positional Power
- Win-win is okay if both sides
bargain very hard

Collaborative:

- Teamwork & Trust
- Synergy – Strategic, Cultural, &
Operational Alignment & Integration
- Work Ethic, Integrity
- Long-Term, Strategic View
- Value is more than Price
- Cherish Differences as
Innovation Engine
- Mutual Benefit
- Vision & Values Driven
- Share Fairly, Create Anew



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Think of these three as “primary colors” – just like Red, Blue, & Yellow. Seldom do we find organizations or people that are purely one “color” – most are a unique colorful blend of the three themes. Essentially, about 90% of humans are “triple wired” in our DNA to act in either of these three modes. It is their experience, value structure, culture that will bring out and reinforce one or the other or all three simultaneously.

Humans have the inherent capacity to transcend their *adversarial* and *transactional* archetypal behaviors, act *collaboratively*, and continue to transcend beyond that to act *synergistically*. In the collaborative mode, humans have the capacity to enter into an “*alta* (higher)-transcendent” level of *synergistic interaction*. For example, there are times when a team or group enter what is called “the zone” where their level of interaction, energy level, display of skills, productive capacity, agility, or problem-solving capability experiences a quantum jump, sometimes known as a “virtuous circle.”

Evolutionary biologists are concluding that human evolution proceeded at a rate far greater than any other living species because humans, in a symbiotic culture of trust, were able to adapt in complex/adversarial conditions because we could innovate and use our diversity of talents to our advantage – conditions that drove numerous other creatures to extinction. (99% of all species that have been on the planet are now extinct.) The unique skill sets that underpin “synergistic selection”⁴ are our abilities to collaborate (especially to build trust) and to co-create (to find ways to use diversity of thinking to solve complex societal problems). And when we, as a species, betray the basic magnetism of synergy, we actually increase the chances of following the glide-path of extinction when adverse conditions arise. The repetitive examples of economic collapse and warfare are ample evidence of the extinctive nosedive glide-path when

⁴ See Corning, Peter; Synergistic Selection – How Cooperation Has Shaped Evolution and the Rise of Humankind; World Scientific, 2018. In this important book, the author makes a strong case that *functional synergy is the cause of cooperation in living systems*, and dysfunctional behavior is not the “natural” behavioral response. While this bold premise is still quite debatable, there is a very strong case that the conscious choice of humans to operate in collaborative and synergistic ways has advanced human civilization, transactional interaction has sustained (but only slowly advanced) civilization, and continuous adversarial interaction has reversed the course of progress.

adversarial greed, fear, and dominance override the natural synergistic control systems of human governance.

To illustrate the positive progression of synergistic interaction, in economics, what we call the "division of labor" is actually the "synergy of labor." By using diversity of talents, we create businesses which then link into global supply chains that interact in massive value networks that produce and deliver goods and services that no single human or organization can possibly replicate.

12. the Potence of Pro-Activity

Words, mindsets, and beliefs, no matter how high minded, are like an engine at idle -- producing no power; plenty of potential horsepower, but moving nothing.

Or like a battery, fully charged, connected to lights, but with switch turned off, making no difference. It's the difference between a statue and a dancer.

The spirit of life is enlivened by the power of action, especially pro-action: getting in front of problems, moving forward, creating bold new futures, making dreams realities. One wise pro-action is worth ten re-actions.

It is the energy and firepower of growth that ignites all the other concordances. Action vitality: a life force in itself.

Action is the catalyst for the other concordances to attain their vigor and glory enabling us to develop the foresight to see around corners and break the invisible bonds of paradigms, to test and then develop new mindsets, solution sets, skillsets, and toolsets to make the world a better place than one found it.

Only when we are pro-active can we be the designers of our world, the "masters of our fate and the captains of our souls." This is how we go beyond *living* our lives so that we may *lead* our lives.

We must produce Leaders, Managers, Teammates, and Citizens who behold the 12 Concordances of Liberty. This is what Liberals and Libertarians both miss, but where they potentially join

Not that Colliberative Education is "intellectual" or less "contemplative" than traditional education, but that it places more value on collaborative action, which produces concrete results that can be measured and thus complete the learning

feedback loop. This actually integrates the “heart and mind” through action we produce together.

As an organizational professional, you will normally be attracted to the more practical approach in education, and for very justifiable reasons.

Unfortunately, despite all the billions of dollars spent on and invested in education, it seems no one ever tried to bridge the divide between the philosophical and practical schools of thought.

Perhaps because bridging the gap is not well accomplished with a compromise – a blending of half of one and half of the other – all you’d get is a poor outcome like trying to mix oil and water.

A bridge across boundaries should rise higher than the points it connects.
