

**Organisational Spirituality:
A Way Forward for Business Coaching?**

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Introduction

Overview of Document

This project seeks to inquire practically and theoretically into the field of spirituality in Business Coaching. This document is centered around two modes of inquiry, one theoretical in terms of a literature review, and the other a reflection on the application of these theories in my coaching practice.

Chapter One entails a literature review which explores the key theoretical concepts around spirituality in the business coaching context. I use this research later to inform the application of spirituality to my own coaching caseload.

In Chapter Two I reflect on my own practice and what I have learnt during my experience of applying some of these theories and methods.

Chapter Three considers the opportunities and pitfalls of embracing the notion that within the business coaching arena, that spirituality is an appropriate area to openly address and label.

In Chapter Four I summarise my findings. I reflect on my conclusions, based on evidence from my practical experience and library based research. I attempt to answer the question: Should organisational spirituality be considered in every business? What benefits, if any, might it bring? And what are the dangers or pitfalls of introducing a spiritual element to coaching in the business environment?

Chapter One

Literature Review

It seems the more I know about spirituality, the less I 'know'. I don't know what it is but I do know what it feels like. What I also know is that it is difficult to define. And even if you could, it's even more difficult, if not impossible, to "implement"....some things just can't be implemented"....whether for social change or as an attempt to affect the bottom line.

Butch Farley - CoachU

Spirituality is a vague and often misunderstood concept within Business Coaching. The term 'organisational spirituality' is a fairly new term and a confusing one for many. Here I shall endeavour to explain these terms.

Spirituality is recognised as being distinct from religion, even though all religions use a variety of spiritual practices e.g. meditation, prayer, contemplative silence and so on. Spirituality is "perceived to be more inclusive and less encumbered with ideological baggage" than religion (Poole 1). It typically can include any number of the following concepts: "meaning, wholeness, integrity, interconnectedness, creativity, ethics and transformation". Spirituality is based on personal interpretation and so there is no one singular definition. However it is generally agreed that spirituality is a "meaning-making construct" that gives life its purpose (Poole2).

Kinjerski and Skrypnek offer this description of personal spirituality.

- A physical sensation characterized by a positive state of arousal or energy.
- Positive affect characterized by a profound feeling of well-being and joy.
- Cognitive features involving a sense of being authentic.
- An awareness of alignment between one's values and beliefs and one's work.
- A belief that one is engaged in meaningful work that has a higher purpose.
- An interpersonal dimension characterized by a sense of connection to others and common purpose .
- A spiritual dimension characterized by a sense of connection to something larger than self, such as a Higher Power, the Universe, nature or humanity.
- A mystical quality characterized by a sense of perfection, transcendence, living in the moment, and experiences that were awe-inspiring, mysterious or sacred.

My own personal definition of spirituality would also include: a higher or combined consciousness, creative insight derived from an unknown internal or external 'source', the sudden 'sensing' of energy or patterns of the natural world, and for some, insight from perceived gods, goddesses or angels. To me the term spiritual applies to anything which 'energetically' connects us to others and to the world, and includes both the material and non-material realms.

Dr Allan Nohre separates the concepts of soul and spirit for business coaching purposes. He regards spirit as the energy that moves or calls us. But in order to have optimum spirit we must first have a relationship with soul. We do many things to raise our spirit, i.e. to get our energy moving. We celebrate for each other to stimulate our energies and are very oriented toward being motivated to 'get things done'. "However, performance without purpose is empty achievement. "More and more employees want purpose". Purpose and mission is about soul, both at a personal and an organisational level, whereas spirit is about performance (Nohre interview). Therefore organisational spirituality is a culture at work which acknowledges and develops soul and spirit in the individual and the organisation. It aims to align the 'soul and spirit' of the individual with the organisation's soul (purpose) and spirit (aims).

Stephen Covey sees 'purpose' as the "voice of the human spirit - full of hope and intelligence, resilient by nature, boundless in its potential to serve the common good." Covey says that when your conscience draws you to meet a real need in the world, by igniting your passion and by using your talents to fulfil this need, "therein lies your voice, your calling, your soul's code" (Covey 5, The 8th Habit).

Can organisational spirituality help elicit greater commitment, creativity and flexibility in people? Robert Hargrove says the work of the transformational coach within organisations involves "unleashing the human spirit." so the coachees' capacity for new possibilities is radically extended. The coachee's idea of what is possible is re-created from the inside, using a shift in beliefs and assumptions, and this increases their capacity for new possibilities (Hargrove 7,8).

Hargrove says that in business, the hierarchical model "withers the human spirit" by dividing people and setting up power struggles between individuals and groups. Most organisations are still run by "autocratic governance," and this often means

getting people to do what they prefer not do. Whereas "what is personal and sacred to people is usually either denied or treated as unimportant" (Hargrove, 8). Mitroff and Denton report that on a scale of 0-7, working respondents scored spirituality at 5.7 which is high in terms of its importance to them, but reported that they could only bring less than 'half' of their soul to work (Mitroff & Denton 1999). Research also shows that nearly 75% of UK workers that were surveyed were interested in learning how to live in alignment with their values but 90% of UK managers surveyed believed that their organisations have never attempted to discuss the issue of spirituality with their employees (Howard 2004).

In the hierarchical model stability, predictability, and control are valued above any holistic model, creating a norm that "inhibits creativity and the notion of adding value." In the end, "people resist and everyone feels bewildered, frustrated and resentful." This gives rise to all types of destructive and defensive behaviour (Hargrove 8). We must check whether we are coaching in an environment of "unilateral control, submissiveness, and dependency." If we are, Hargrove gives us tools to help the coachees shift to "internal commitment and involvement" (6,7), which one would consider as a move towards working with the soul.

Hargrove's Stewardship, Internal Commitment and Learning Model aligns itself with what I would consider to be classic organisational spirituality. First he looks for a shift in context from command and control to commitment and learning (seeking). His primary questions for personal learning are deeply spiritual questions. The first is: "Who am I?" (really), and the second, "What can I do that I passionately care about?" Once these questions are answered fully, he says individuals within organisations naturally form groups around a shared purpose larger than themselves. They can then choose their own goals and plans and are able to work together with natural discipline and intensity from their interior (soul) motivation. Control is by people's involvement in their cause and through their community of "commitment, communication and support" (Hargrove 9). This communal commitment supports Kinjerski and Skrypnek's description of personal spirituality (see page 2 this document).

Spirituality has been linked to learning processes in business since the mid eighties. Mingin (1985) describes how "information-based technology will lead to spiritually

oriented fundamental abstractions." And Vail's (1985) organisational transformation process involves four elements, "grounding in existence, appreciation of the openness of the human spirit, understanding of human consciousness, and an appreciation of the spirituality of humankind." (Biberman, Working 1).

Creativity and spirituality have been associated throughout history. Bill Lucas recommends brain stalling to bring more creativity into the business environment. Even when using brainstorming, he advocates taking quiet time to reflect on ideas generated to allow for connections or inspiration. Lucas promotes spiritual techniques like meditation, yoga, relaxation or walking in nature. He says these are often engender truly creative responses more than frenzied brainstorming (Lucas 16). Biberman quotes Dehler and Welsh (1994) that "increasing numbers of executives and managers are [also] turning to various types of meditation and spiritual disciplines [for the purpose of] coping with stress and for finding meaning in their turbulent work environments" (Biberman, Working 1)

The concept of spirituality is also strongly linked with ethics. Organisations struggle to bring to life corporate policies relating to ethics, values and corporate responsibility. Often these concepts are not in the minds or hearts of the employees. By enabling staff an opportunity to access their own spirituality, these initiatives can naturally become part of the organisation's consciousness and dialogue (Poole 3). Moe-Lobeda suggests that "moral agency and the indwelling spirit are one and the same", so "business ethics become disoriented where workplaces deny spirituality" (22).

Nohre suggests that a spiritually based organisation extends its sense of responsibility and ethics both inward to its employees and outward to its customers, the surrounding community, natural environment and further into the world. Only by leaders themselves becoming aware of their own soul and spirituality can this be fostered in the organisation (Nohre interview).

Chapter Two

My Own Practice: Applying Principles and Theories

How does my work as a coach fit into this picture of organisational spirituality? If "who we are is soul and what we do is spirit " good coaching aligns an "individual soul (who) and purpose (what) with an organisation's soul and purpose." In principle, this alignment improves spirit, energy and performance (Nohre interview). I will discuss how I used this principle to help a client (whom I shall call John) to discover his purpose at work.

John had initially approached me because he was writing a book for publication. This was his first book without co-authors, and felt he needed assistance to stay on track, develop a long term plan, and keep his motivation up. However, it became obvious that issues at work were impacting on his agenda to write his book. John was faced with new challenges after being given a promotion and a new role. His work load had increased significantly; at the same time he was expected to keep publishing and maintain all of the tasks of his previous role. Through coaching he eventually came to realise that he was spending too much time on aspects of work that were not aligned with his soul purpose . His primary passion was to bring information to the world. What ignited his passion was research and writing.

John had been frustrated with his new position for several reasons. He was finding himself overwhelmed and exhausted from trying to do too much. He had confounded himself in initial attempts to make small changes to become more efficient at work. Hargrove says that seven out of ten attempts to introduce change fail in today's businesses because of the lack of awareness of the "unwritten rules of the game. " Most organisations have formal rules written down somewhere, but there is usually "another set of rules not so clearly stated but plainly felt" (106,107) and it is these that affect us on a spiritual level.

Hargrove says the way to create an opening for real change is to close the gap between the formal policies and the unwritten rules. He offers a process for uncovering this disconnect, and then helps people understand the logic (albeit often unhealthy logic) behind the unwritten rules. In this raising of awareness, coachees become more conscious of the truth of their own, others, and their organisation's situation.

John began to unearth what he considered to be some of his own unwritten rules. One was "I am not good enough." He found that he had the habit of trying to do far too much to prove to himself and others that he was 'good enough'. In doing so he always set himself up for failure, because of what he actually believed. He could never come near to achieving what he set out to. By trying to do too much his energy became dissipated, he was continually being distracted from one thing to another. He had no real priorities and he lacked focus. He was very worried that he was near nervous exhaustion. He was becoming less and less effective and his joy for his work was at an all time low.

Hargrove identifies the next major inquiry as: "what is really important to this person or group?" What often becomes apparent is that the small daily frustrations are often merely symptoms of a deeper unease. The real issue is the fulfilment of the deeper spiritual and soul values of finding "meaning, wholeness, integrity, interconnectedness, creativity, ethics and transformation" within their work (Poole 2) .

Hargrove's four compass points of stewardship, personal transformation, creating communities of commitment, and expanding peoples' capacity to take effective action appear to be deeply rooted in organisational spirituality. "Stewardship is taking a stand for the future of the people, communities, complex social systems, and the world we care about". Stewardship advocates creating businesses that are not only productive but that "nurture the human spirit" by eliminating the artificial boundary between office concerns and the deep concerns we have as human beings, thereby creating a context where people "bring their whole selves to work" (Hargrove 18,19).

Although John initially employed me as a Life Coach to help him complete his book, a large part of our coaching has been about how he engages with his work and his organisation. I have realised from working with John that I can use spiritual principles with coachees that can go on to transform their working environments. After their own coaching experience, they can decide to apply the principles and models at work. This is particularly true when the coachee (like John) is in a leadership or management role. This has been encouraging for me because, while completing these studies, I found I had little desire to work as a coach within most business structures. But I now see that I can help people to make changes within their own organisations, by coaching them as individuals first for their own personal agenda. By experiencing the models they can then

apply them to their own organisation. This way the business coaching is going on - prompted from the outside rather than from the inside of the organisation. This suits me as I prefer not to get involved in the politics of business. There can also be pressure that arises from addressing two conflicting agendas - those of the employer and the coachee. These challenges seem to be typical of business coaching.

Personal Transformation, the second compass point, is regarded as a "continual process of becoming". This happens through identifying and altering the coachee's context which has been built up from beliefs and assumptions that they are often unaware of. It encourages people to question their thinking and frames of reference to create fundamental shifts in spirit e.g. from selfishness to stewardship, from control to creativity.

John's own engagement in this process showed up anomalies in what he believed about himself, compared with the actual evidence in front of him. For example, although he had achieved this highly sought after position in a very competitive organisation he had always (and still) believed, he was "not good enough". Because of this he always did much more than was required, taking on projects that were not necessary and never stopping to prioritise a manageable plan for himself. By trying to continually impress others, he had exhausted himself in the process and had difficulty managing his private life. He was worried that if he had to maintain this pace he would suffer from nervous exhaustion.

After working on aligning his values and soul purpose with his work, John has started to realise that too much of his energy is being wasted trying to do things that are not his strengths, nor are they aligned with his values or purpose. Consequently he has found himself procrastinating and wasting time, finding other things to distract him, and this leaves him feeling very drained. It also reinforces his belief of being "not good enough." These tasks are not substantial but together they take up a lot of his time; if not in the actual doing, he is wasting time and energy procrastinating, avoiding, and worrying about getting them done.

John has decided he needs to address this, and has realised that he is going to have to either let go of certain projects, or delegate some tasks if his new position is to remain viable and still allow him enough time and energy to complete his book. By

all accounts he has a fairly good surface relationship with his colleagues, but finds himself in a competitive environment. Although he tends to help others with their projects, it doesn't sound as if this gets reciprocated much. He is the one who will always help, will always say yes immediately, and he does! He has now decided to give himself permission to say no, and (also something out of character) to ask for help when he needs it.

By considering and acknowledging his own strengths, John is now in a process of finding ways to delegate or let go of some functions which he has no passion for, but which others enjoy doing. He feels this will have a positive impact on his stress levels, his working relationships and will allow him to spend more time doing what he considers is most important for his soul, and for his career. He told me that just by having a date to work on this plan together has released him from a huge stress and he is feeling much more relaxed. This also means he will have more energy to put into his personal life. He shares custody of his son and has a weekly commitment with his elderly mother. His plan will also prioritise time for research and writing, which he sees as part of his major life purpose.

Nohre makes a distinction between soul and spirit. He says that any act of introspection, seeking or receptivity is soul work. The bringing of these gifts from the soul (sense of purpose, knowing who I am and my feeling of connection to the world), into society through practical doing, he classes as spiritual work. He suggests that without time to do the soul work (quiet introspective, reflective inner work) we are at a disadvantage in doing anything spiritual (Nohre interview).

I am particularly interested in this notion of what happens when the coach and coachee don't know which direction to go next. As a person involved in training performing artists, I have always considered this uncomfortable moment as a wonderful opportunity, a crucible for inspiration. But this requires a person to remain receptive and trusting. While coaching I have tested this to see how long I can get clients to hold this space to allow for inspiration. In John's case insights have come from holding the silence sometimes through a point of discomfort for both of us. This was necessary when doing a process to confront his old limiting beliefs. The ability to keep the tension and focus on this deep soul work was very

important for John. I had to keep bringing him back on track, as this belief did not want to be put under the spotlight, and his ego was doing everything it could to distract him from answering the deep questions. He had lived with this belief "I am not good enough", for so long, that he now regarded it as part of his identity. His ego was afraid that he would lose part of himself if he let this belief go...Who would he be then? He began to realise how just this one belief was affecting absolutely every aspect of his life and had also sabotaged what he had tried to achieve in his life . This was a true revelation to him born out of deep soul searching.

Occasionally I have had instances where, in holding this silence, clients (or myself) have received an image or metaphor, which has pointed to a deeper answer to their question. One day my client Catherine received an image she did not understand at all. The meaning was only revealed to her after she stopped trying to figure it out. My natural impulse is to make my own interpretation and suggest it. But when coaching I try to resist this as I think this is a distraction from the coachee's own soul work. I keep learning about the importance of silence within my practice. It is challenging work for a chatter-box like me, but actively pursuing silence always pays off in terms of creating a calm and peaceful space, and allowing clients to have deeper insights bubble to the surface.

Coaching empowers people to create a future based on who they are deep down in their soul by "unearthing what they passionately care about"(Hargrove 21). During this process of 'soul discovery' I have found that coachees can go through periods of discomfort, where they want to move on too quickly. They are often unfamiliar with going deeper into themselves and this can give rise to uncomfortable feelings. I sometimes find they want a quick fix, or me to 'advise' them. It concerns me that some want to give up control of their decisions to someone else. I think this may be from the institutionalisation of schools and business structures, where many have become used to being told what to do. As a coach I find I must resist their urge (and my own) for me to 'fix' things, even when I think I may know the answer.

In Hargrove's third compass point: creating a community of commitment , communication is used to build a shared view rather than fighting for our own views. This shared vision and purpose underpins the individual's (spiritual) feeling of doing something deeply purposeful , not only for themselves but for the good of the whole

(Hargrove 23). Although we have not talked about this yet, I can imagine John (when he has his own agenda more organised) holding meetings with his colleagues to build a shared view and purpose to encourage more co-operation between them. John is a people person and he wants to help others. He has seen the benefits of coaching and can also see its relevance within his own department.

Finally in Hargrove's fourth stage: Expanding People's Capacity to take Effective Action, the coachee is required to reflect on what their personal calling is. Once they find the arena that fits their value system, Hargrove, like Nohre believes their level of effectiveness is greatly increased (25). From engaging in his own coaching process, John has become clear about his own calling. And by applying some of the tools at work, he may go on to quietly create a culture that hopefully will help others to recognise their own calling.

Hargrove talks a lot about raising awareness (148-154). This can be interpreted as the ability to become more conscious in our daily lives, which is a shared spiritual discipline within most religions. In the raising of our consciousness we start to see ourselves as connected to everyone else, and we come to understand that when we are good to others we are actually the best to ourselves. We have more of our resources available in the moment to be able to assess things calmly. This awareness, or consciousness enables us to act (rather than react) out of our imagination, instead of our past programming. Instead of blindly reacting to the world, we can become more proactive, driven from our chosen values and principles.

The Dalai Lama, who is the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, talks about training ourselves to feel deep compassion for everyone and everything on the planet. This comes from acknowledging that everything in the world is connected to us. At a molecular and energetic level, quantum physics has proved this connection to be true. Science is starting to support spirituality. We cannot hurt another without ultimately hurting ourselves. Christianity is primarily based in the idea of love and compassion for others and the Hindu religion advocates that we all part of the same *prana* or life force. Hence we are affecting everyone and everything through our presence, thoughts and actions. I do not believe that organisations should promote any particular religion, but it is important to note that religious people who are sincere obviously want to practice spirituality in their everyday lives.

In my work as a coach, one of the most important preparations I do is to spend time before an appointment in a state of positive intention for my client. I pray for both of us to raise our awareness through our work and to allow this to bring further healing to our world. I spend about ten minutes doing a deep inner listening (meditation) by focusing on my breath and stilling my internal chatter. At the end I reiterate my intention to be of service, to help bring clarity, awareness and compassion to this person by totally accepting them without judgement. I then consciously try and make space for them to do their soul work.

Chapter Three

Opportunities and Challenges in applying

Organisational Spirituality in Businesses

Marjolein Lips-Wiersma says that people with spiritual world views are 'animated' if their work allows them to 1) develop and express themselves and 2) enables them to serve and to have unity with others. She says that without this alignment they will eventually transition to alternative employment (497-520). This begs the question, can businesses afford to ignore spirituality in this climate of competition for their most talented staff.

'Team spirit' is probably the most commonly used term within business that is directly related to spirituality. The extent of team spirit can make or break a company, or any sports team. Team spirit is elusive; some companies have it, and others do not. It is almost like an energetic 'dance' between people, like they are responding to the same tune. This synchronicity lies *beyond* the physical, emotional and mental realms which are primarily self contained in the individual, into the realm of the energetic 'soup' which we all are immersed in; the world of spirit.

Studies have shown that organisations who are "able to inspire employee loyalty to a higher 'cause' substantially out-perform their peers. This is due to the increase in motivation and commitment this tends to generate. Findings suggest the companies who understand the spiritual yearnings of their staff and find ways to address these through their organisations gain "deeper allegiance and increased discretionary effort" from their employees. Where employee motivation is low, studies show that any percentile increase in employee engagement increases organisational output and profits. Spirituality initiatives tend to produce a demonstrable financial return (Poole 2).

Research carried out by Georgeanne Lamont in the UK among 'soul friendly' companies such as Microsoft UK, Bayer UK and Scott Bader showed these companies all had much lower than average rates of absenteeism, sickness and staff-turnover, which in turn saved them significant amounts of money (Poole 2). Another study under 'The 100 Best

Companies to Work For 'project' - showed that those businesses where criteria for inclusion showed high ratings for employee communication, respect, fairness, diversity and philanthropy - outperformed the stock of their competitors by over 100% (Poole 2-3). In addition to these 'hard benefits' which are measured monetarily, several 'soft benefits' have also been identified. Organisations have been learning that suppressing aspects of the personality at work leads to homogeneity that is neither ethical nor useful. Organisations are increasingly interested in how they can support staff to bring their 'whole person' to work (Poole 3).

Organisational spirituality allows the goals of the company to be re-framed in terms of service to humanity, thereby offering opportunities for vocation which in the past traditionally have only been sought in the fields of medicine, teaching and religion (Poole 3). In the 'war for talent', companies like Ernst and Young attract students with an attractive package which also includes the opportunity to be supported in volunteering and fundraising for their favourite charities.

How does one start to introduce spirituality into an organisation? My experience of offering a coaching service to one large organisation proved interesting. The local branch manager wanted me to work with herself and her staff, and I would have used the work as a case study for this project. They were about to go through some restructuring of the departments within their organisation and this manager wanted to help her staff through this process of change. At the same time she hoped there would be an opportunity for further development. It was a prime opportunity to get everyone in their new roles working as a team, communicating within and between the newly structured departments, and building a vision for themselves.

She was pleased with my proposal and objectives and thought it would be a matter of rubber-stamping from the area manager. However the final answer was that the area manager was concerned that those responsible for in-house training would feel threatened by bringing someone in from the outside. He felt that it would cause problems within the organisation. Consequently the project did not go ahead. Meanwhile the local manager was struggling to bring her staff through the restructuring with all of the fears, insecurities, hidden agendas and so on that come with it. How do we break through this conservatism? It appears that sometimes it has to be through the back door.

There are simple tools that organisations can use, if they want to start out on a spiritual journey. Marjo Lips-Wiersma's Holistic Development Model uses the axes of self/other and being/doing applied specifically to spirituality in the workplace. Thus the self/being quadrant (developing and becoming the self) suggests an audit of policy and culture in support of personal growth, self-knowledge and maintaining integrity.

The self/doing quadrant asks organisations to what extent they allow staff to create, achieve and influence. The other/being quadrant - about unity with others - assesses how employees are encouraged to form supportive relationships and whether the organisation has shared values which create a sense of belonging. The other/doing quadrant asks whether the organisations supports the individual to make a difference in the world. Both of the 'other' quadrants relate to the 'hard reasons' in terms of out-performance because they align staff with their own values and the mission of the organisation (Poole 4). I am seeing the manager (that I would have been working with) again and I will pass this on to her. I know she is interested in what I do and she may like to apply this model to her organisation as a starting point for inquiry.

If she is open to that developmental model I will also introduce her to Georgeanne Lamont's eight tools of reflection that help create space for spirit in the workplace. These are stillness, listening, story, encounter, celebration, grieving, visioning and journaling . Lamont suggests meetings which encourage periods of silence, talking circles and reflective dialogue, as well as active discussion of organisational values . Story, visioning and celebration are used in many organisations. Encounter relates to equality and being open to each other. Sometimes staff are taken off-site for this type of development to engage in activities which build relationships. Grieving is not used as much, but William Bridges work into managing transitions in the workplace would support the need to allow for some sort of grieving to take place when there have been substantial changes e.g redundancies. Journaling ensures that a reflective observation element takes place (Poole 5,6). By giving this manager the opportunity to try out new tools, she may even decide to come to me privately. In this case she could (like John) work on her own personal agenda, and from that take tools to use with others into the workplace.

What other challenges are there in bringing a spiritual philosophy into a business? Poole says that in practice, spirituality may be hard to differentiate from 'religion'. She warns that coaches and employers need to be aware of the formal implications of anti-discrimination and human rights legislation (Poole, Ashridge) For some, even a mention of the word spirituality seems to hark back to being burnt at the stake. In a predominantly Catholic and conservative country here in Ireland, it wouldn't feel comfortable to openly talk about spiritual matters in most of the organisations I have been in. We can do the spiritual work, but don't label it as such or they start imagining Oiija Boards and séances!

Another term used to indicate acknowledgment of spirituality along with the other dimensions is 'holistic'. Whereas spirituality engenders fear and suspicion, 'holistic' is sometimes not taken seriously. One person told me that when he hears the word 'holistic' he imagines a hippie in a caftan reading angel cards and chanting. Personal Development seems to be the umbrella term favoured to cover spirituality as one of the four aspects of being: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual. It is interesting that spiritual is always listed last, yet I believe spiritual balance underpins the health of all of the other three.

So the terminology does seem problematic for some people. Yet, in not naming it, are we trying to avoid spirituality? And so, if a coach should be able to discuss the undiscussable, are we doing a disservice by not broaching it? I have come to the conclusion that to promote organisational spirituality, we have to be able to name it.

Chapter Four

Conclusion and Summary

Spirit and soul are not management techniques. They are available to us by personal commitment to their values. Soul and spirit are realities in us. They are aspects of who we are and are available to energize our working relationships. Organizations will far surpass what's considered acceptable performance when their leaders keep their eye on soul's purpose and their throttle on spirit's power.

Dr Allan Nohre

So how does one introduce organisational spirituality into the workplace? Employees are often sent to seminars and conferences to get pumped up with spirit (or enthusiasm). The motivational industry is designed to lift spirits but it doesn't help with discovering your soul, which underpins the lifting of spirit and energy and creativity at work. Consequently the enthusiasm often wanes when participants return to their jobs. Coaching is more aligned and appropriate for the purpose of discovering soul. Soul is about personal discovery, rather than someone telling you how great soul is, e.g. in a conference.

Businesses need to ask questions about the larger community if they want their operations to reflect more soul. "Ask how your company fits into the whole, as if we -- our business, our employees, everyone in our community -- were one. This is a spiritual perspective" It involves both social and ecological responsibility (Nohre Interview).

Mathematical Chaos and Complexity Theories have proved that if a small change is made within a complex system (such as many of today's organisational structures) it can percolate through the whole system affecting everyone including associations outside of the organisation i.e. families and related communities. Thus, a coach only has to work with one person who has influence in a large organisation to help create a more spiritual culture. From there positive shifts can happen over time, not only for the whole organisation but even beyond to the extended community (Greene 25-27). In my own experience, John had approached me as a Life Coach for his own personal objectives; certainly not as a Business Coach. Yet by working on his personal agenda, John has gone on to use some spiritual business coaching techniques with his staff.

Some may say that spirituality has no place in business. But intelligent companies are now seeking ways to address the challenges of accelerated change, job insecurity, stress, conflict and increasing turnover. Work places which have systems attuned only to production and competition, who suffer from institutional bullying, or do not address our human need to be treated as whole, are finding it harder to keep their best staff. The commitment to organisational spirituality within judicious businesses is improving their ability to address these challenges. The hard facts show this has positive influence in terms of increased staff retention, less absenteeism, and increased productivity. There is hard evidence that acknowledging and allowing for spirituality at work, is strongly associated with the most successful businesses.

How do we get conservative organisations to consider allowing spirituality to the workplace? I believe I am a spiritual coach but would not print it on my business card (yet!). I do not think many businesses in this country would be ready for this. However within my private coaching practice I always ask clients to assess the spiritual aspect of their lives. Once I explain what I mean by spirituality clients quickly see its relevance. I have found that for me, the easiest way to get these ideas into organisations may be through a private coaching partnership, and then my client can apply the process they experience to their own organisation.

In my work I use a combination of Solution Focused and Strengths Focused Coaching methods, mixed with (where appropriate) a large dose of kinesiology, a dollop of intuition, and a good big cup of practicality. So where is spirituality in all of this? It is the heat that cooks it, that brings everything together and creates something quite different than the sum of the parts. It is why we even bother to put all the ingredients together in the first place. Without the spiritual cooking, there would be no cake, only a gluey gobby mess at the end.

Spirituality underpins every other aspect of life. If we feel disconnected from others, or life, it can result in emotional/mental issues such as depression, anxiety and panic (and we know these conditions are rife and cause all sorts of problems in the business world). It can also lead to addictive behaviours to fill this void. Addictions cause a myriad of problems for businesses in terms of loss of production, loss of creativity and concentration. Accidents are more likely to happen, and more mistakes get made.

An inability to connect with spirit often results in selfishness at some level, as we feel cut off and therefore believe in a scarcity model of the world, rather than the infinite abundance of spirit. We do only what we must do, to get our money. We don't trust others. The other extreme it can lead to, is the excessive giving of our time, money and energy because we feel we are not worthy, or 'good enough' (see John's story chapter 2). This can lead to burnout. A person secure in their spirituality knows that deep down they are always good enough.

Lack of spirit leads to unhealthy physical habits as we regard our bodies with disdain instead of respecting the wonderful opportunity they give us in this life. Mentally and emotionally we tend to close off to the possibilities and people around us. If we deny the spiritual aspect of our existence, the thought of old age and death can throw us into a panic, leading to a mid-life crisis. All of these things severely impact on one's ability to perform at work.

So for me, as a coach, to work in the physical, mental, and emotional realms, but ignore the spiritual is, I believe, undermining the client, or the organisation. After everything has been planned to the last letter, and all appears 'fixed' on the outside, many people appear to be functioning well. But when they open up, often this is masking a low level depression which does not go away until we become connected to life.

Learning to trust my own intuition has been a real learning curve. As a coach I am more than a delivery system for coaching techniques, and I am more than a toolkit. Sometimes things are revealed about my clients in unusual ways, through a picture, or a sound, or a hunch. I think this is the ability of our souls to communicate at a deep level, beyond the merely verbal. And when this happens we must be prepared to check these signs out with our client. At the end of the day, nothing can replace a human being, who has the very best intentions for their client. This intention, backed up with our full attention, can have a huge impact on the many people who can rarely avail of someone with their best interests at heart.

I think that organisational spirituality needs to become intrinsic in all businesses because we need a massive ethical shift in the world that we live. This shift is necessary in both individual and collective responsibility. It is needed in all

organisations, be they schools, universities, community organisations, small businesses or huge corporations. As the world progresses technically at an astounding rate, we must allow our spiritual evolution to catch up, otherwise this so called 'progress' may all be for nothing. We may turn around one day and realise that without soul, purpose and spirituality, it has all been a pointless exercise. In spite of all of the exterior trappings, status and wealth, it is the acknowledgment of our soul and spirit that makes us truly happy.

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