

# Articles from Integral Leadership Review

## Interpreting Along the Deckled Edge: The Artist's Place in Leadership

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*Life is—or has—meaning and meaninglessness. I cherish the anxious hope that meaning will preponderate and win the battle. (Jung, 1998, p. 359).*



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Art reflects the soul of humanity, its beauty, dissonance, and struggle. We can't imagine our world without art. But artists, unless they have received the acknowledgement of the great museums, are not considered for any essence of wisdom or reflection within the high-rise architecture of the corporate world. Today more than ever the artist stands in the margins of all that is valued in our culture in terms of worthwhile and compensation-worthy work, as art programs are cut from school curriculums, galleries continue to close in a depressed economy. Although electronic media can produce exciting images and products, the understanding of the unique process of art-making and the value of artistic translation and integration is lost. The artist's value to society and therefore the artist's value to leading and leadership is increasingly overlooked.

It seems that every day a new leadership guru is born with new buzzwords, acronyms and formulas for leading in complex environments, yet we still do not know the magic formula to get it consistently right.

*[T]he tireless teaching of leadership has brought us no closer to leadership nirvana than we were previously; . . . we don't have much better an idea of how to grow good leaders, or of how to stop or at least slow bad leaders, than we did a hundred or even a thousand years ago. . . (Kellerman, 2012, p. xiv)*

But there is an art to leading and those who can actually steer these great ships must be comfortable with innovation, interdisciplinary language, and relationships. They need to be capable of seeing from a multidimensional perspective. Integral leadership provides the fluency to draw connections and build bridges between unconventional processes. After thirty-five years navigating between two worlds, as a painter/art educator and a variety of roles in the healthcare industry, the pieces are beginning to fit together. Now more than ever as we reconnect with the art of leading and integral leadership, it is time to dust off the artist and invite creativity to the table.

Defining the artist's place in leading Corporate America enlists a creative process in itself, an orchestration of many different disciplines. In the harmony and blending of these voices, much like colors on a canvas, we find the heart and soul of integral leadership. Through deep understanding of Potentiating Arts™ (McCaslin & Snow, 2012), transformational learning (Mezirow, 2000), "congruous autonomy" (Scott, 2002), human motivation and creativity (Fox, 2005), and others, we offer wholeness to the organization and the individual in a comfortable space to conceive, explore, evolve, and celebrate.

As these elements move into the intention of leading, an artist begins the integration and the introduction through the process of wonder, and wondering. Wonder is a word that has deep roots in my childhood. As I sit with wonder I am aware of an innocent openness and excitement. It is a word with many subtle meanings as well as profoundly archetypal meanings. When something is referred to as 'a great wonder

of the world' wonder gives substance, weight and meaning to the age of our existence. In this context, wonder is both question and answer, certainty and uncertainty. Wonder is a word that from my own experience leads to divinely powerful transformation. Wonder secures mystery and amazement as valued tenets toward human self-recognition. It is wonder that sparks genius.

I know epistemologically that as one evolves as an artist one engages in transformative life processes through wonder. As an artist myself, through time the actual processes became my greatest frontier of discovery. It was within the creative process that I found ways to access inner wisdom; it was within my creative process where I found the urgings to become, to question, to look farther. Those who live with both feet in the corporate world seek much of the same transformative cultivations, yet they lack the knowledge of creative language to make the safe passage. The boat is at the dock, but they are still trying to understand water. The artist can offer the integrative element that activates blending of leadership styles, mindsets, values, and abilities; influence the receptive field and catalyze synchronicity within the great corporate brain. The artist can imagine and persuade openings, find places for the obsolete and the extreme. The artist is most capable of mining the true wisdom of an organization.

“Wisdom begins with wonder” (Plato, 155d). McCaslin and Snow (2012) honor that deep connection between wonder and creativity when they write that:

*Perhaps this declaration is the most intimate reflection of Socrates' character and was his philosophy. Perhaps he understood that when nothing was certain all things remained possible. He kept his eye on the possible as he was full of wonder. To be full of wonder, to be wonder-full, is what it means to be a potentiator. When we are wonder-full nothing possible escapes our perception. When we are wonder-full we see as the gardener sees; we see bounty in a seed. When we are wonder-full human potential and therefore the Potentiating Arts™ become our purpose. (McCaslin & Snow, 2012)*

I would reach further by saying to be wonder-full is to be full of creator, or creativity. Interestingly the marine god Thaumias, whose name means “miracle” or “wonder” fathered Iris the goddess of the rainbow, messenger from heaven. This perfectly illustrates the origins of wonder coming from the heavens, and communicated by way of creativity, color, and diversity.

Within the integral leadership ensemble, the harmonic voices carry the keys of potential, learning, evolution, and creativity to name a few. Jack Mezirow offers a definition of learning, “Learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to future action” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 5). We must wonder before we construe. Wonder stands at the trailhead of possibility and expansion. Ken Wilber (2000) refers to the proximate self in ego development and makes the comparison of ego structure to “waves of being and knowing” (p. 35) in a process that moves to identify with and consolidate, transcend and disidentify, then include and integrate into the next level. In other words, as we rise to one platform we are reaching for the next. And if one were to consider the internal culture within a corporation as an arrival of being, it then follows that what took this long to evolve must now reach for transcendence.

Mezirow's concepts of transformative learning can be used to understand the integration within any internal culture (individual or communal) because, “Adults have acquired a coherent body of experience—assumptions, concepts, values, feeling, conditioned responses—frames of reference that define their world” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 288). As we age the potential for transformation deepens and may be experienced as a “quickenings” as the transformative mechanism evolves from the fertile ground of that coherent body of experience. The point where a “revision of meaning” takes place from a creative perspective may be influenced by certain environmental factors such as freedom to wonder, assistance in integration, or age of the individual.

Mezirow believes that the journey of transformation is proving to be more individual and recursive. It is in this recursiveness, I believe we find a smaller mirror, the creative flow model (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 31). These process paradigms may be sister paradigms where Mezirow views the wheel of transformation on a larger scale, Csikszentmihalyi defends transformation in the minor tasks with each movement into flow. Here again we meet the artist as interpreter or catalytic force. Mezirow parallels the creative flow process in the journey toward creative transformation, or these might actually be the same processes where knowledge becomes medium. Mezirow claims:

The journey of transformation needs to be explored in everyday situations, looking at the process of

change over a number of years. This long-term perspective could, for example offer understanding about regression that might follow the transformative process. Also, it would provide a window into how the individual is acting on his or her life differently in response to the transformative experience. (Taylor in Mezirow, 2000, p. 292)

The confines of our current knowing though comfortable at first at the subconscious level seem to set these states of being (relaxation, boredom and apathy) into anxiety as they soon begin to resonate as unfulfilling (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 30). Anxiety motivates us to peek around the corner, to wonder, and what follows is what Mezirow refers to as “disorienting dilemma”. For a perspective to be built and set up for transformation one must live in an egoistic place for an indefinite period of time. This is what Mathew Fox would refer to as the buildup of heart (Fox, 2005) and a preparatory phase to face anxiety, adversity, life crisis, or major life transition, and that disorienting dilemma. Can it be that a corporation as an entity would spend great periods living in that egoistic place, building up heart, and now must face anxiety, adversity, crisis, disorientation, and finally transformation? My sense is that if this is so, then we are exactly where we need to be in the evolutionary scale. Therefore, though these may be the worst of times, all is truly well. The artist is native in any ethos where a creative process is either stunned by disorienting dilemma, or completely in flow.

Creative processes continue to be examined, scrutinized, and defined and there are many versions of this. Among the musicians and one of the first to define a creative model is Graham Wallas. Wallas narrowed the creative process to four stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification (Auh, 2000, p. 4). Comparatively, John Kratus (Auh, 2000, p. 5) in 1989 clarified a four-stage process as exploration, development, repetition, and silence (p. 4). Artistic image-making processes have been reduced to two primary processes by Galenson & Jensen (2001) as “conceptual execution” and “aesthetically-motivated experimental” (p. 34). It would seem reasonable however, that creativity as an entity would not follow a familiar path over and over again and could not be confined to one set process. Why we endeavor to capture such an elusive bird has destructive implications. We know there is process at the essence of creativity and perhaps that should be enough.

## **Looking at the Creative Brain: Enter the Artist, Stage Right**

Only since the late twentieth century has neuroscience been studied to the extent that it has, and yet the neural basis of creativity rarely considered. Creativity exists in every one of us. Every day we are forming new thoughts, assumptions, ideas, or conclusions. We think of new ways all the time to dress, decorate, or relate. But there is such a thing as extraordinary creativity and we are yet to discover how one who is extraordinary, like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart or Friedrich Kekule, pattern thoughts and acquire brilliant revelation.

Some theories state that these extraordinary people have enlarged neural processes, or an enriched variant of ordinary creativity that might fluctuate and increase at different times of day or periods of life. We do know that high “creatives” describe mental activities that are anything but ordinary and neural processes that are uncommon and different qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

Before the 1950’s there was little known about the creative brain. J. P. Guilford, a psychologist noted for extensive research on thinking skill and genius urged the psychological academy to begin research on creativity when he gave his 1950 Presidential Address to the American Psychological Association. At this address he brought to light the scarcity of published research on creativity and argued that creativity was not necessarily a natural result of intelligence (so assumed at the time), but came rather from an unordinary process of thinking (Andreasen, 2006, p. 24). Guilford laid out a model of thinking abilities he called “Structure of Intellect” (Barlow, 2000). Basically he was saying that different people rely on different sources of information, more or less.

These sources included:

- Visual information directly from the senses or from imaging
- Auditory information directly from the senses or from images
- Symbolic items such as words and symbols which generally convey some meaning
- Semantic meanings often, but not always, associated with words
- Behavioral information about the mental states and behavior of observed individuals (Barlow, 2000, p. 1)

By this model Guilford speculated that an artist might excel at processing visual information, but be poor at processing words, numbers, or other symbolic content. Just how an artist processes and prioritizes meaningful information still remains in the realm of the mystical and ethereal, but Guilford's call to undertake studies of what he regarded as one of humanity's most important traits: the ability to generate novel ideas (Andreasen, 2006, p. 25) attempted to pin down that trait that contributed to the advancement of culture. Guilford wanted to know if creativity was a "continuous dimension" or a "discrete category". If we could isolate the utility, we could maximize the potential Nobel Prize winners, the great composers, architects, scientists, or painters.

My own experience as a painter and an educator of art has led me to my own conclusions on what conjures the artist from the ashes of humanity. For me it begins with an urging by life's challenges to create, control or interpret the world through images and narratives that restructure and build a trusting utility free of abuse, restriction, limitations, and disbelief; a safe environment to engage in anxiety and challenges, meaninglessness, and disharmony. Then there is the passage and employment of this utility and a submission to that space to allow for change and transformation. From this experience follows a rest and a harvesting, a silence that allows the field to lay fallow, a time of reflection and meaning, and then wonder.

As belief systems cross pollinate, traditional leadership paradigms find their justifications diluted and ineffective. With the rise in followership and the merging of internal cultures, the old guard desperately struggles to hold on while the new generation evolves with technology further advancing the blending of beliefs and perspectives. Truths become increasingly sophisticated, ultra-faceted, and difficult to contain. With an exceptional ability to generate novel ideas combined with synchronistic abilities to integrate and restructure it would seem essential to have an artist's mind directed toward the transformative vision of any great corporation.

## **The Necessary Path of Ego: Artist Lifespan Development**

As student of art we were never told that art would change us. We wanted to change Art, of course to suit our ego; we wanted art to change the world. But we all thought as beginners that we had something already and all we needed was the perfect viewer or patron to validate our work. Moreover, we never fathomed that we might actually change the world by simply knowing artistic language, and then simply being.

Karen Wilson Scott (2002) contends that older adults move toward fulfillment, satisfaction, and self-actualization in challenging life pursuits. She refers to Carl Rogers for an illustration of that departure from egocentricity to authenticity.

The individual moves toward being, knowingly and acceptingly, the process which he inwardly and actually is. He moves away from being what he is not, from being a façade . . . He is increasingly listening to the deepest recesses of his physiological and emotional being, and finds himself increasingly willing to be, with greater accuracy and depth, that self which he most truly is. (Rogers, as cited in Scott, 2002, p. 262)

Artists, by way of their own means, by way of innate process will encounter creative challenges that will force the decision to continue in the face of uncertainty. Those who continue to paint, but set aside their ego, desire for adulation, and fame crosses a threshold into a spiritual maturity that has not often described in the history books (Ryken, 2006). Though I believe this transformation has always been part of the artist's experience, artists and society have only recently had the language and freedom to articulate this phenomena, and how or where the artist progresses. In many instances this stage or "abandonment" in an artist's life is regarded in a negative context. The artist is referred to as a "has been" or, because the projection of fame has been eliminated, she is seen as less motivated in her process. Yet, it may well be that the process itself determines direction at the time of crisis.

David Galenson, an economist, along with Robert Jensen, an art historian (2001), published an article discussing the life cycles of great masters. In this writing they examined typography of the artists' life cycle showing the point in life when they "peak" as their most valued work was completed. They were able to observe a link between an artist's process type and stage of notoriety to indicate if one would peak in early career versus late career. Galenson and Jensen set out to determine if there was a way to predict the significance of the artist's work as it relates to the impact of society and ultimate value, and "the idea of making inexpensive materials the source of great wealth" (Galenson & Jensen, 2001, p. 3).

Csikszentmihalyi (1988) also suggests that art has a time and place that may be different from the artist and suggests that art should be judged in its time (p. 325). Great musicians such as Vivaldi and Bach were under-recognized in their lives only to be credited years after their death with their great contributions to the Baroque concerto (Auh, 2000, p. 7). But the ability to clear up the mystery about “when” a work of art will be impactful on the world, collected for the transformative qualities perceived and experienced by an audience, is what Marshall McLuhan leaned toward when he said, “I think of art, at its most significant, as a DEW line, a Distant Early Warning system that can always be relied on to tell the old culture what is beginning to happen to it” (cited in May, 1975, p. 23). Though it sounds like sorcery and divining the future, if understood from the perspective of divine intention, it could offer many insights on the ways society will reach forward for the sacred. Artist as prophet is not a new concept, but as May (1975) declares, “Our problem is: Can we read their meaning aright?” (p. 24). Who better than an artist to be the DEW line translator within the evolving corporate cultures?

Galenson and Jensen (2001) maintain that the key to the correlation of artists’ importance to humanity is innovation and alignment of the work with the intellect of the period. They approach their research trying to understand the association between age and innovation. Galenson and Jensen propose that the life cycles correspond to production methods (process). The two processes are: aesthetically-motivated experimentation, and conceptual execution (p. 34). Young exceptional genius artists work deductively to make conceptual changes, while the older artists work inductively and innovate experimentally. They have developed a confidence in their innate process and suspended the need to control by proceeding then in faith to allow for experimentation and engagement with something outside of themselves. I might add that these are all qualities of great potentiating leaders.

Table I

Artists	Process/Innovation
Masaccio, Raphael, Picasso, and Johns	Conceptual Execution These artists enjoyed notoriety during their earlier years (30-40) and by the end of their lives had fallen in popularity.
Michelangelo, Titian, Rembrandt, Cezanne, and Pollock	Aesthetically-Motivated Experimental These artists gained a bit of recognition, but at the end of their lives were soaring.

Table II (Galenson, & Jensen, 2001, p. 34)

Artist	n	Artist’s age in year of median illustration	Age in single year with most illustrations
Conceptual Execution			
Masaccio	35	26	24
Raphael	52	28	28
Picasso	88	31	26
Johns	13	26	25
Experimental Innovators			
Michelangelo	123	40	37
Titian	52	53	41,53
Rembrandt	69	46	36
Cezanne	36	56	67
Pollock	17	38	38

Note: *n* is the total number of illustrations of each artist’s work in the book surveyed.

For the Experimental Innovators their work becomes more spiritual in their processes. As Vincent van Gogh wrote, “Art is something greater and higher than our own adroitness or accomplishments or knowledge; ... art is something which although produced by human hands, is not created by these hands alone, but something which wells up from a deeper source in our souls” (van Gogh, 1958, pp. 399-400). Van Gogh understood the task he was given to interpret the deeper evolutionary messages. He only sold one painting in his life; the value of his work (over 900 paintings total) came after his death in 1890.

One could go so far as to conclude that the experimental artist, while being assisted in divine

conversation, is being guided as an interpreter of God, God creating art for the future, in the artist of current time, mind, and heart. This might explain why van Gogh's work became and continues to be so powerful long after his death.

Galenson and Jensen (2001) believe strongly that age, spiritual maturity or a lifetime of experience with minimal or slow rising in fame change the artist in such a way that they develop an inner strength, wisdom, faith and knowing in their late years. The experimental artist can start anywhere when they begin a painting. Once the painting has begun they experience their work as open to something beyond themselves in a way, they work in a frenzied fashion meeting the painting's changes and challenges with a dialogue within the language of the painting. This artist knows when to stop when the conversation feels complete, for the moment. They also allow themselves to return to the conversation later on. They keep watch long after they have stopped painting for harmonic and disharmonic nuances.

Conceptual artists do careful renderings and diagrams in the planning stages of the work and they have an image in their mind of what a finished piece looks like. These tend to be the painters who reached notoriety early, and feel as if they must not change any part of their creative or production process. They are confined within their early rules and preconceptions. The experimenters allow for rule breaking.

Describing the late life process of an artist and the transcendent urges of this station the initial question of age really has no bearing. The evolutionary process of each artist is as individual as his or her art. But as Wilber (2000) defines, creative emergence as "spirit-in-action", or "God-in-the-making" (creativity being the ultimate metaphysical ground, p. 25), implies that there is prior development to be obtained before reaching that element. According to Wilber self-transcendent creativity is spirit, but one must develop a self before one can transcend. It is the self-transcendent creativity that behaves as God and requires a willingness to leave the self behind.

The creative movement, "secret impulse" referred to in Wilber (2000) understands that the evolution as it progresses toward a higher behavior moves toward inclusion, a more complex organization. With reference to holarchy, Wilber (1996, 1999, 2000) describes the system as being dependent on the lower holons. The lower holons can get along without the higher, but the higher cannot exist without the lower (Wilber, 2000, p. 32). In the system of development as an artist each leg of progress is dependent on the previous work, the previous struggle, the artist's internal conflicts, movement toward meaning and resolution. The "secret impulse" of the artist follows Wilber's holarchy model.

It is not that "higher" or "lower" is a value judgment but necessary steps in evolution. It takes a *lived* life to build the lower "holons", to follow the trail upward. This evolutionary process is described by Ervin Laszlo as "The Grand Synthesis" (as cited in Wilber, 2000, p. 35) and ultimately says that where the first level (matter) is favorable, life emerges; where life is favorable mind emerges, mind then leading to spirit. Corporations now move toward spirit as well. This creative evolution is simply the process of transcendence. The artist is well equipped to manipulate the layering and interweaving of life experiences and personal meaning derivation, through his or her belief in personal capability and commitment to the extraordinary, enriching the fertile field now more than ever in terms of assets, or great deposits in the corporate bank of wealth.

It is in the higher levels of the holon where the whole of life's experience comes together. Scott (2000) suggests that in later years we follow the pull of extraordinary involvement, the direction of inspiration. Scott defines this as Congruous Autonomy:

*[A]n enduring, self-efficacious belief in personal capability and compelling rightness and identity, inspiring commitment to extraordinary involvement in a pursuit (rich in lifetime patterns and trends), despite sacrifice and risk, to develop one's highest potential. (p. 257)*

We are finally able to discern the voice of a divine calling after setting aside the distractions of our ego making, if possible, to do our greatest work later in life.

Carl Jung (1998) in his later life reflected on his own evolution and urgency of his transformative process.

I have had much trouble getting along with my ideas. There was a daimon in me, and in the end its presence proved decisive. It overpowered me, and if I was at times ruthless it was because I was in the grip of the daimon. I could never stop at anything once attained. I had to hasten on, to catch up with my vision. Since my contemporaries, understandably, could not

perceive my vision, they saw only a fool rushing ahead. (Jung, 1998, p. 356)

He later says, "A creative person has little power over his own life. He is not free. He is captive and driven by his daimon" (p. 357). Jung understood the unfolding processes of a creative individual from early developmental stages into later life as a beckoning from what he called mana, daimon, or God.

Jung (1998) uses the word "mana" to mean an extraordinarily transformative power that comes from a person, object, action, event, supernatural beings or spirits (p. 396). Mana has the power to work magic and heal; it is a force of creativity. Especially in the healthcare industry, we must be mindful of our internal 'mana'.

More in line with Mezirow's belief that as we age we develop a greater potential for transformation, Abraham Maslow (1970) understood that there was a marked time in life when self-actualization occurred.

Self-actualization does not occur in young people. In our culture, at least, youngsters have not yet achieved identity or autonomy, nor have they had time enough to experience enduring, loyal, post-romantic love relationship, nor have they generally found their calling, the altar on which to offer themselves. Nor have they worked out their own system of values; nor have they had experience enough (responsibility for others, tragedy, failure, achievement, success) to shed perfectionistic illusions and become realistic; nor have they generally made their peace with death, nor have they learned how to be patient; nor have they learned enough about evil in themselves and others to be compassionate; or have they had time to become post-ambivalent about parents and elders, power, authority; nor have they generally become knowledgeable and educated enough to open the possibility of becoming wise; nor have they generally acquired enough courage to be unpopular, to be unashamed about being openly virtuous, etc. (p. xx)

To risk giving it all back, to have 'acquired enough courage to be unpopular', earning the label of "has-been" the self-actualized artist follows that "secret impulse" that can no longer be denied. The crucible contains the early egocentric romance, the technical development to mastery, ten thousand hours of studio time, life's injuries, losses and joys to yield self-actualization and true authenticity.

## **Crisis With the Internal Culture**

Tests and challenges in a creative life are reflective by and through the artist and the work. Stephen Nachmanovitch (1990) illustrates this by saying, "Creativity, like life, is a recursive process, involving interactive, interlocking circuits of control and nourishment between organism and environment" (p. 186). Here is where he or she falls naturally into a corporate system.

As an artist evolves he interacts continuously with culture, the global environment, internal environment and creating environment. In this constant interaction an artist develops that language by which he or she communicates. A fusion begins to develop, as Maslow describes (1963, 1993) of person and world.

*My feeling is that the concept of creativeness and the concept of the healthy, self-actualizing, fully human person seem to be coming closer and closer together, and may perhaps turn out to be the same thing. (p. 55)*

With this fusion comes a greater and greater integration of self with non-self, person and world and characterizes what Maslow describes as the "creative attitude" (Germana, 2007, p. 68) where an artist becomes so integrated and joined with their artistic environment that they become "one".

And the creative attitude which promotes a fuller, more intimate engagement in such transpersonal realms may be characterized as extending oneself beyond one's self on behalf of that which is greater than just oneself, alone. (Maslow as cited in Germana, 2007, p. 68)

With crisis defined as a turning point, or "an unstable condition, as in political, social, or economic affairs, involving an impending abrupt or decisive change" (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 2009) this crisis stage for both artists and corporations leads to the development of dominant internal cultures. The internal culture and its strong role in contributing to motivations or the drive toward individuality require the distinction of the artist's ability to interpret the internal culture.

"It seems one can pick up the art of a village through one's bodily participation in its ceremonies" (May,

1985, p. 15). This quote speaks to the holistic and multimodal nature of culture as it connects to psychology and is further clarified by Belzen's (2010) illustration of belief and faith when he offers the perspective of Much and Mahapatra (as cited in Belzen, 2010) that the experience in a religious cultural framework is a "socially shared illusion" (p. 50). I would take this one step further and say that the experience in an artistic cultural framework is the same. Matsumoto (2001) contends that within the cultural psychological perspective, mind emerges in the joint mediated activity of people co-constructed and then passed on by the culture (p. 19). Culture emerges from individuals interacting with their natural and human environment. This is reflected in the art, music, architecture and literature as byproducts of this emergence.

With the understanding that mind and culture are in constant dialogue, the illusive and ever changing nature of culture comes to light. Culture is continuously developing in context and meaning as we advance as humans, and within each individual culture there exists constant change and evolution. It is in this movement toward individual culture that an artist evolves; therefore, within individual cultures evolve individuals with their own deeply personal internal cultures. The development of internal culture happens by crisis diverting the individual from external to internal in order to survive. A place free from confinement where one can give oneself to the natural process of creation (Cassou & Cubley, 1995, p. xix).

John Stuart Mill (Goldstone, 2006) believed that the 'internal culture of the individual' was 'among the prime necessitate of human well-being' (p. 1). Mill was a British philosopher, economist, moral and political theorist, and administrator. He is considered the most influential English-speaking philosopher of the 1800's. His writings are considered among the deepest and certainly the most effective defenses of empiricism and of a liberal political view of society and culture. His father, also a philosopher, who kept him home and isolated from other children, rigidly raised Mill. Emotion was regarded with contempt; Mill was confined to an environment of extreme detachment. "I thus grew up in the absence of love and the presence of fear: and many & indelible are the effects of this bringing up, in the stunting of my moral growth" (Mill in Stillinger 1961, as cited in Goldstone, 2006, p. 2).

In Mill's childhood there was no room for emotion. The immediate culture in which he lived was difficult, he grew to understand the value of developing his own internal culture, to turn his attention inward toward the cultivation of character. In doing this he recounted:

*I found the fabric of my old and taught opinions giving way in many fresh places, and I never allowed it to fall to pieces, but was incessantly occupied in weaving it anew. I never, in the course of my transition, was content to remain, for ever so short a time, confused and unsettled. When I had taken in any new ideas, I could not rest till I had adjusted its relation to my old opinions, and ascertained exactly how far its effect ought to extend in modifying or superseding them. (Goldstone, 2006, p. 5)*

Here we can tease out a faded image of the non-emotional corporate world refocusing in a way that integrates an emotional component. Mill's account of his process of creating a new and deeply personal internal culture perfectly illustrates this experience as it would happen for both the artist and the corporation.

No human child can develop without culture. Culture seems to be intimately connected to the life force on the planet. Life force being creative force, we then understand that creativity and art are the vital essence of culture. And as large corporations invest in their internal cultures, they must be mindful of the internal creative force, and careful not to starve the culture's artist.

Creativity existed long before humans and Fox (2005) makes the point, "[It] is not a human invention or a human power isolated from the other powers of the universe" (p. 30). Creativity is the universal energy that is activated by the provoking and prodding of life. When we are confronted with sorrows and joys, as "deep heart" experiences (p. 45) we are broken open and made available creatively. In the words of Cassou (1995):

*[T]he creative process is enough. It is not only enough, it is a doorway into a direct experience of the essential life force which is at the root of the urge to create art. It is the process itself—in the creative energy it releases, in the new perceptions it brings and in the deepened connection with oneself it fosters. (p. xviii)*

In viewing culture as an ethos of an organism or organization, an outcome of process, dialogue, and



emotion, it is easy to see how these dialogues flow and evolve outward into the art and symbols that are reflected within the indigenous environment. Returning to the concept of a socially shared illusion, a vision of visions (Belzen, 2010, p. 50), and emerging from history and narrative, I am tempted to envision the comparative analogy of a painting environment to the corporate environment. Each stroke of paint, containing color, weight, and emotion builds up the surface until a culture, in a sense, is compiled. Within that environment a dialogue takes place, stroke responding to stroke, artist to image and memories, and emotion to human spirit.

It is the dialogue between culture and emotion that is the essence of integral leadership and externally expressed in creative inquiry to create further dialogue. Within these dialogues we examine nature of beauty and the essence of the human spirit. Maja Rode (2000) offers that "It is our willingness to continue asking, to continue inquiring that provides the fertile ground for these repeated, deepening insights" (70). Our concept of beauty evolves with culture and human emotion through our willingness. Said practically, the artist consults his inner culture and his external culture, history, beliefs, and individual and shared emotions when he attempts to translate, interpret and negotiate his world.

## Conclusion

It must be said that examination and inquiry of this nature could not be possible unless the researcher has reached a point of self-actualization, though not self-actualization as a destination but an acquired language. This language tells us what lens to use, which colors off our palette, and the time we must allow for harmony, harvest, and spirit. With regard to the success of cultures and relationships there is much remaining to chance and there is much that creativity has yet to reveal. It might be interesting to reflect on the nature of generosity-of-spirit and how this phenomenon must be engaged to fertilize the creative ground as a leader. Impoverished attitudes within the corporate walls are the Achilles heel to any creative language, or transformative efforts.

One might argue that since self-actualization can occur on its own, perhaps the advancement of a corporation toward transformation would naturally follow. I believe for this natural process to take place we need the artist's mind and heart, and their fluency in the languages of chance and change – a sage in every native sense to integral leadership.

*I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart's affections and the truth of the Imagination – What the imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth – whether it existed before or not – for I have the same idea of all our passions as of love: they are all, in their sublime, creative of essential beauty.* John Keats (Letter to Benjamin Baily, November 22, 1817)

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### **About the Author**

**Diane Meyer, MA**, is a doctoral student at Sofia University (formerly Institute of Transpersonal Psychology) Graduate School of Transpersonal Studies where she is researching transformation through the creative process. Diane holds a Master of Arts degree in counseling and psychology from Prescott College, Prescott, Arizona, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in studio art from The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. Meyer has also been a professional artist since 1975 and has shown nationally in many prestigious galleries. Her watercolor paintings are housed in over 25 distinguished corporate and museum collections. Diane Meyer has been an art educator since 1983 teaching painting, drawing and design at Pima Community College, Tucson. Since 1979 she has worked in the healthcare industry providing education and organizational development. For more information: [www.dianemeyerart.com](http://www.dianemeyerart.com), [dlucyart@msn.com](mailto:dlucyart@msn.com).

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