

Contemporary Leaders of Courage and Compassion: Competencies and Inner Capacities

Monica Sharma



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Nothing short of a new level of worldwide leadership and commitment for sustainable and equitable change will suffice to create a better world today and for future generations. For the first time technologies and resources exist to transform our situation and generate lasting results. The choice is ours.

Hundreds of transformational leaders are producing results in 60 countries on every continent. I currently focus on 40 of these courageous leaders around the world. My journey over 20 years has been profound, walking alongside many courageous and

compassionate leaders—leaders walking different, yet similar, paths! Their profile: women, men—50-50; from every region—Africa, North and South America, Arab States, Asia, Europe; two below 30, half in their 30s, a third in their 40s, and six above 50 years of age. They are from different professions—clinician, activist, actor, manager, CEO, economist, religious leader; and from different sectors—citizen, media, academia, business, government, civil society, non-government organisations, UN agencies and faith-based organisations. The skills, competencies and inner capacities articulated hereafter apply to all. I have not named these leaders and have not referred to their location because they continue to generate results at considerable risk to themselves. A quarter received death threats and a third were removed from their jobs for daring to speak up, for breaking exploitative patterns, for refusing to be part of corruption, for proactively addressing harmful social practices or for challenging and acting against strongly held societal prejudice against other religions, caste or class. I see courageous, results-oriented, passionate engagement for a thriving and just world—I see new leaders creating a new narrative for large scale change. What are the action elements of this transformative narrative that is emerging worldwide?

1. GENERATE ACTION FROM THE GROUND OF BEING. WHO AM I?

Know the power of one's wisdom for action.

It is not just a vague feeling or intuition. It is concrete and grounding. Sheikh A, an influential Imam from Syria, says "I know who I am, my essence and quality of being. There is no separation between being and doing. I now know how to honor and source this

space for action in everyone—and I do so routinely." He redesigns a large programme supporting widows and their children, offering what's needed, from giving them money to building their inner capacities and skills. Consequently, they are transformed and thrive. He says, "I state what I stand for in life and stand firmly in the ground of my being. I proactively engage with Father X, a Catholic Priest, and I have been openly threatened for collaborating with him. I have attended many interfaith dialogues and meetings and appreciated what is common in our religions—the common ground. This creates a very different space for dialogue. Father X and I deeply respect each other as human beings and work together to address social issues, such as the stigma related to HIV/AIDS, from the ground of our being, far beyond the common ground of our respective religious tenets."

This wisdom profile includes and transcends the self-awareness competencies articulated in the seminal work of Daniel Goleman on emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. It is not 'wisdom' in the sense of beneficial traditional knowledge and practices we must learn from and respect. I am using 'wisdom' to mean something very specific—our inner capacities for compassionate, courageous action in the world, grounded in our oneness, our prior unity, our universal compassion.

Create with courage.

Samantha, a citizen of the United Kingdom, directing a Pan-African programme, creates an equal playing field between leaders from the North and South. This is a foundational shift that challenges dominating power and control. Samantha's approach is both innovative and empowering. A few progressive officials back her up initially. But soon institutional forces rally to replace the core strategies for genuine voice, equality and empowerment with the more superficial and to move Samantha elsewhere in the organisation. Samantha says wisdom, an inner capacity within each of us, is beyond technology, and that it is the foundation for sustainable change. So she dares, like Jessica in another institution, to redesign programmes. She generates results by navigating the system with all that it takes in a large, global, established organisation where change is usually perceived as rocking the boat. Samantha is a living example of what Rollo May calls the creative courage to discover new forms, new symbols and new patterns on which society can be built.

Distinguish one's wisdom from social, professional and personality identities. Embrace all with respect for diversity.

We are in Djibouti where the most influential religious leaders have gathered from 20 Arab States to address female genital mutilation. Khadija and Ehab have worked for over 4 years to create platforms for discovering new ways to generate results. Nabil, Olfat, Etienne and Sayeed engage religious leaders in the Leadership for Results programme. The results: for the first time, fatwas against this practice and sermons in mosques and churches



(left to right) Transforming harmful social practices—religious leaders, Khadija and Monica in Cairo; Creative space—tangible results

against female genital mutilation. And, as expected, death threats from fundamentalists who promote entrenched, harmful social practices and norms! We are in Jaipur and Chennai in India where Sonam creates platforms to address child trafficking with pimps, commercial sex workers, police, non-governmental organisations and the United Nations. Results: fewer children trafficked. Amazing—this inner capacity each and all of us have! Who pushes back against these results? Colleagues who maintain the status quo and a few who feed off trafficking in political, social and government sectors. They are threatened by competence and action. We are in hospitals in Karachi, Pakistan and Kathmandu, Nepal, reducing maternal mortality and improving the work environment. Results: fewer maternal deaths, a voice for every nurse in physician-dominated environments, a voice for janitors in decision-making, where social norms and caste structures decide all janitors will be ‘Dalits’ (low caste), and less corruption. This is accomplished by Medical Superintendents Sher Shah and Narain. Each is subject to misguided slander in local newspapers. Each is asked to leave and do so. Later they are reinstated with due acknowledgement of their courage and compassion through their persistent pressure for integrity with their respective governments.

What is common in these creative and courageous leaders who generated results in these and other examples? It is their ability as leaders to ground, source and value their (and others’) wisdom as the most important determinant of sustainable change. Wisdom is our inner guidance based on universal truths and insights, leading one to compassionate action in the world. These leaders recognize and value social identities based on nationality, religion, race, gender, politics, education and culture, without rigid intolerant boundaries and relate to these diverse aspects with ease and respect. They also recognize that we all have different personal styles of expression—different personalities—unique ways of moving in the world. They are able to work with professional skills, talents and abilities in the world towards achieving success, prosperity and service. Their ability to work with multiple profiles is extremely valuable. Too many local and global wars are revved up and fought on social identities or profiles!

2. ENTER THROUGH PARTICULAR DOORS INTO CREATIVE SPACE.

Burn with an inexhaustible inner fire.

It is not an obsession. It is not a cause. It is not dogmatic. It is not fundamentalism. It seems like a paradox—no agenda and yet an

agenda to manifest a just world. There is a deep sensitivity to the intense suffering of the world moment to moment and a knowing that I can make a difference and will not stop until I do. It is a fire with the flow of water, the energy of a secular, global ‘Bodhisattva,’ the broken heart of compassionate action that heals and a constant eye for inequality and injustice. Paola supports youth leaders fighting for justice in post-war Serbia and Kosovo. She works with cooperatives in Italy for fair wages and inclusive labour markets; she is working with leaders from districts and municipalities in Burkina Faso to manifest equity and well being, using the Millennium Development Goals as the entry point. Wherever Paola works, the inner fire is inextinguishable! And Paola is in action.

It is possible to talk or teach about injustice, but I have never been able to create a platform for igniting the inner fire in anyone for a just world. An innate sense of what is universally just seems to be present, or absent or merely rhetoric.

Orient towards results.

Megan is transforming the criminal justice system in a state in the United States, step by step. Ehab in Egypt and Mel in the United States are running for election with a specific results agenda—inclusion and a voice for everyone. Caitlin’s transformational leadership programmes make a significant difference for women: in Africa legal provisions translate into reality for women who can now inherit property in their own name; in India, women are bringing integrity to bear upon local governance through proactive health, education and income-generating programmes. Nileema enrolls the political and executive leadership in Ethiopia to transform the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Results: widespread testing where there was none, violence against women through female genital mutilation and abduction addressed, adequate financing for local initiatives assured.

These leaders are passionately engaged and committed to results, yet they are non-attached. (Not detached—being detached is withdrawal.) They enter the space of transformational leadership through the door of commitment to action and results. They distinguish the usual output-outcome conversations from sustainable impact. Keen understanding of inter-relatedness and interdependence is core to the way they think and strategize for results.

Distinguish and use multiple frameworks, methods and tools.

Gomathy and Sudershan protect the commons with fishing



(above to below) Citizens for Peace in Mumbai with Gulan and Monica; Paola generating positive change; Leadership inside-out; Josselyne and Monica in New York; Beyond business as usual—leaders deal with hard truths in Burkina Faso

communities in the eastern coast of India. Josselyne's purpose is to make peace profitable rather than making war profitable. These leaders enter through the door of the results they commit to accomplish and they know how to weave a coherent, aligned set of strategic transformational frameworks, methods and tools. They do not enter the creative space with the lens of one branded transformation theory or framework or set of tools or methodologies. Their work includes but goes beyond conventional multidisciplinary efforts. It is more akin to what Fritjof Capra said. We need to formulate "a network of interlocking concepts and models and at the same time, develop the corresponding social organisations. None of these theories and models will be any more fundamental than others, and all of them will have to be mutually consistent."

Today's transformational leaders leap forward from the building blocks laid by previous paradigm shifters—human rights, civil rights, animal rights, ecological movements. They are establishing new codes and norms, such as progressive journalists creating awareness through radical transparency, making the invisible visible; celebrating diversity, higher consciousness and peace; making the science and art of our deeper consciousness accessible, available, popular and a valid foundation for societal work. The ability of leaders to use and distinguish multiple frameworks is central to generating results with diverse populations and navigating the systems in which they work.

3. DESIGN DIFFERENTLY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE! TRANSFORMATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Recognize the invisible, multiple patterns and systems that shape societal and planetary situations and actions; recognize interdependence.

Pervin and Gulan organize 'Peace Talks' with citizens in Mumbai to foster an introspective sharing and reflection on how we experience 'Identity.' They focus on religious and caste-based identity and how this shapes our everyday life as well as the choices we make in the political and other public spheres. Their work is not easy because of the hatred of the few who fan vicious, violent, divisive, fundamentalist factions and ignite riots between Hindus and Muslims and because of the entrenched views and discrimination on caste lines that result in inhumane exploitation! Pervin and Gulan work simultaneously with media and the entertainment industry to explore, analyze and make visible the systems and underlying causes that perpetuate deprivation, exclusion, poverty and injustice. They promote alternate systems that are democratic and based on values of social equity. Jessica also recognizes the power of making the invisible, visible. She creates programmes for children and adults in the Tenement Museum to inquire and understand the invisible factors determining human conditions today and yesterday, towards a better tomorrow.

It is increasingly recognized that the conventional industrial paradigm is inadequate to face the challenges today and in the future. Leo and Vernice, for example, design and teach innovative programmes in their universities in the context of today's interdependent yet fragmented world where intrinsic human capabilities need to be sourced for sustainable change. Parasraman is pioneering a new field and discipline in India to redefine higher education and foster global citizens and responsible leaders for today

and the future. He engages faculty and students in creative education programmes and applications through large-scale projects.

Today, in every part of the world, the thinking on policies, rules and regulations is done by a few for the many, with the assumption and justification that people and citizens do not have the expertise to influence policy nor the ability to think critically. New research indicates that all humans, regardless of education, have the innate ability to see patterns and to create new systems and forms. Since critical strategic thinking is possible for all, not just the experts, we need to create ways to stimulate critical thinking along with authentic processes to give a voice to everyone. This is critical for our future.

Design and deliver on actions, simultaneously in real time that (1) source wisdom—being (2) shift systems and/or create new patterns (3) solve problems.

Dorrie and Cynda continue to inspire and engage in a Compassionate Care and Empathic Leadership Initiative, collaborating between the Schools of Medicine and Nursing. This is envisioned as nothing short of a transformational model for delivery of compassionate care as a way of life, a paradigm shift for health and well-being, with respect and dignity for all. The goal is to improve the lives of those with life-threatening illnesses across the life span and in health care settings by transforming practice, education, research and community partnerships. Interdisciplinary teams design and implement initiatives focused on strategic areas including adult and pediatric palliative care, oncology, emergency department and education. Results: healthy work environment; compassionate and mindful care; community shaping the new agenda and education redesign.

Brad is in South Africa leading the second largest platinum mining company in the world. His trust in the human potential of everyone, his courage to take risks, his caring and integrity all shape his strategy and actions. He provides platforms for developing transformational leadership competencies for *all* 20,000 miners, staff and managers; encourages innovations and breakthrough initiatives within the company through employees; involves key players—governing boards, trade unions, shareholders and stakeholders. Results: he solves major problems of the company and miners; turns around the company from loss to profit—6-fold increase in free cash flow and a 5-fold increase in earnings; establishes safety mechanisms for miners—reduces time lost due to injury by half and deaths from accidents in the mines by 90%. He sets new pathways to address ‘systems issues’ in the extraction industry beyond the company itself and shifts policy on safety in industry with zero tolerance for deaths and injury in miners. He recognizes invisible patterns and details concerning racism. Brad transforms community service—simply ‘PR’ for most companies—to an opportunity for one’s own growth and contribution for managers and employees. Together, they foster community leadership development to meet their basic needs and create opportunities for education, health and employment.

Paola brings together local authorities, line ministries, traditional leaders and service providers to take a step back from business-as-usual to ask reflective questions that open a larger conversation. We start speaking more truthfully about the systems and human dynamics currently thwarting development.

Hamidou Zoetaba’s cartoons helped us visualise some hard truths such as (1.) the gap between our projects (life in the logical framework matrix!) and the human realities on the ground (equitable start to development cartoon, *below*), (2.) the inherent vulnerability of women as citizens and caregivers and the impact this has on children and their development opportunities, (3.) the lack of dignity and humanity that comes when service providers are not accountable to citizens, or in situations of abuse.



Having everyone (traditional leaders and newly appointed local authorities, some of whom are illiterate) participate in the conversation is key. It allows us to see that, just as we are all part of the problem, we are all also part of the solution, and that the latter is a function of our individual leadership around shared principles—at home, at work and in the community! It also allows us to see that development is not a function of a new theory, technology or idea, but that it is the process to shift dysfunctional systems and generate positive change—one action, one person at a time.

These leaders are pattern-makers, not just problem-solvers. They deal with what is not working by creating alternatives. They are able to identify, distinguish, design and generate responses that integrate the different domains related to the entangled hierarchies of any given situation. They do not only solve complex societal problems at a surface level. They actively address the deeper dimensions of the problematique. They are not caught up in protracted either/or conversations, such as: “Is it about being or doing?” They demonstrate that it is possible to design and implement programmes differently. As Howard Gardner suggests, they cultivate ‘five minds’ as a foundation for action: the disciplined mind to solve problems; the synthesizing mind to make sense of the invisible patterns affecting reality as well as endless incomprehensible bits of information; the creative mind to break new ground, establishing alternatives; the ethical and respectful mind to source their inner values and wisdom for action. Yes, we can! We can simultaneously solve problems, shift systems and source our inner capacities! It is an art to simplify without being simplistic in the midst of complexity!

Design for principled action: Embody values.

Silke is engaged in restoring and protecting the commons globally. She says logical frameworks and brilliant analyses are necessary but not sufficient conditions for sustainable change. “We have to create a process of acting that is ethical and in accordance with the principles of commoning. And we have to be commoners.



(left to right) Barbara designing measurement for equitable, sustainable change; Megan with residents weighing in on prison reform

There is a set of universal principles that we have to unravel, to recognize, to respect and to defend in whatever setting—social practice, business, politics, legal frameworks.” For her, principled action and embodied foundational values are the keys to making the global commons movement a reality. Be a commoner! Do the commons projects we design, lead and manage integrate strategies and methods so that individual values and principles manifest in action? And do these projects explicitly and constantly engage with manifesting core principles and values?

How do we design our programmes to move human rights from rhetoric to reality? How do we generate a world with dignity and freedom for all? What platforms do we create and what methods and techniques do we use to embody the values and principles that underpin human rights while formulating and enforcing social instruments to uphold rights? For example, in designing our responses to address HIV/AIDS, we made technical solutions available—condoms for safe sex, treatment for those with AIDS, safe blood for transfusions services, clean instruments. We addressed systemic issues. We asked, how can we allocate financial resources and provide services and care to those who have little financial resources, but tremendous resilience? Or create platforms to hear those who do not have any opportunity to voice their concerns, as Khadija did? How will we embrace people living with HIV/AIDS when families, communities and society almost always ostracize and abandon them? And most importantly, we begin our work by looking within—to our attitudes, our worldviews and the spirit that informs our decisions even in the face of opposition. We ask ourselves, who am I, and do I embody the values that underpin the human rights principles? We ask, how can we provide services and care without stigma and discrimination? How can we make love in a deeply respectful way, ensuring the safety of our partner? We understand that HIV/AIDS is more than a virus. It is about power relations in the bedroom and boardroom!

4. GENERATE NEW FUTURES WITH TANGIBLE RESULTS!

Persist in dancing with the entire results chain.

They persist, persist and persist. This is not obsession, nor zeal. Nor is it fighting for a cause. It is working to transform what is not working. Barbara says, “I stand for manifesting courage, creativity and passion and for sourcing my action from my true deeper Self, rather than from my culturally and psychologically conditioned self (ego). I am committed to creating a profound change in the world. The major channel for this contribution is my work in the international cooperation and development field. I currently work in a multilateral agency where I am designing new ways to measure results—outputs (specific products or services),

outcomes of efforts (changes in development conditions) and impacts (sustainable and equitable change).” This will shift policies, strategies and methods resulting in building on people’s inner wisdom for strategic action; liberation from limiting beliefs, habits and structures; empowerment; connections, understanding and deep respect between people and between cultures, contributing to peace and development, now and in the future.

Megan engages in results-oriented initiatives that are renewing and rejuvenating the criminal justice system by working with individuals, coalitions and communities ready and willing to expand their view of what is possible. She stands for dignity, compassion, equity and vitality in her life. She is committed to shifting the criminal justice system from one that addresses not only immediate safety concerns, but also addresses and transforms root causes of crime. This approach leads to a space for human potential to emerge—from one laden with stigma and discrimination to one where justice and opportunity are inherent. Simply being charged with a crime—not necessarily convicted—can reduce income by as much as 30%. There are currently more black men in prison than in college in the USA.

Results are key—we all agree. Every programme, project and institution articulates the impact and outcomes they wish to produce and makes vision statements. They state the core values that form the basis of strategy and action. Yet most conventional initiatives ultimately center on outputs—production of goods and services, investments in infrastructure and selected social and economic aspects such as income, health, education, food, nutrition. Transformational leaders know that although outputs and outcomes are important, they do not provide a true measure of human potential and well-being. These leaders also hold with ease the seeming paradox of accountability and results along with the unpredictability of emergence.

Transform spaces in routine action. Transform processes and the way business is transacted.

We have many opportunities to influence change through policies, day-to-day activities, routine meetings or organized events. Do we know how to make these normal activities into spaces where transformation can naturally emerge? Jerry returns to Israel in 2009 to re-launch a Mine-Free Israel Campaign, this time with a growing capacity to stand firmly in his wisdom. Light. Wholeness. Liberation. He has learned how to access the transcendent, positive energy each can inhabit in any boardroom or living room. He says that this newfound realization was to become especially critical for political outreach in the Israeli Knesset. “We knew what we were against: the insidious landmine



Jerry points to place where a landmine shredded his leg; Speaking up—testifying to congress about impact of stereotyping on native American people

inaction, passivity and cynicism. But what were we all standing for? We stood for the possibility of a mine-free Israel within ten years. We stood for the liberation of fertile land for farming. We stood for families living in safety, free of fear. We stood for the healing of people and the environment.” Of course, there are also other actions that are needed for a campaign: research, analysis, media outreach, coalition building, advocacy and lobbying. Jerry and his colleagues urged the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Head of the Opposition to fulfill their promises and called on them to vote in favor of the proposed mine clearance bill. That day, the bill passed its first reading by an unheard of unanimous vote across all party lines (60-0). The proposed legislation was brought back to the full Knesset for a final historic vote on March 14, 2011. Once again, the vote was unanimous. Israel had unanimously agreed to clear its non-operational minefields for the first time.

Vernon stands for restoration, equality and justice. He is fostering leaders to first discover and then live from their innate greatness. A black man, restoring himself, leading an all-black team, he is invited to present his proposal for addressing violence in schools at a town hall meeting. There are over 100 hundred people in the room—a formal, all-white committee, principals of schools and community representatives. After several conventional introductions—names, institutional affiliations and positions—it is Vernon’s turn. There is pin-drop silence when Vernon introduces himself by telling who he is, what he stands for, the breakthroughs he will implement and the current reality he will change. He invites others to engage in similar conversations. He skillfully transforms the space in the room from one of ‘examining the proposal and the person’ to one of co-creating a new reality. Of the 100 plus people, two white male principals stand up to support the proposal and Vernon. Others say it is great, *but...* or say this is what we need, *however...* Vernon and the two white men get sharp and denigrating hate mail, “What is this country coming to, having persons like Vernon leading change!” Vernon is transforming education and criminal justice, step by step, in his county in California through projects, which include the Entrepreneurs Boot Camp, Emerging Leaders, Beyond Violence, Prison Reentry and Reformation and building a high performing community collaborative. Three cheers for one black and two white men!. They are our hope to transform racism and other stigmas in the US.

Like most large, multi-country programmes, The Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) has a Country Coordinating Mechanism primarily to streamline project funding and coordination. These bureaucratic forums are most often uninspiring, unimaginative, procedure-driven, heavy on time as a

resource and not focused on results or goals. But Nestor used this as an opportunity to create a results-oriented partnership—negotiating, deepening and reframing their mandate to serve and truly care for people living with HIV or AIDS in Latin America and the Caribbean through the transformational leadership programme. Result: Seventy-five key leaders, all members of their respective Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM) of GFATM from Argentina, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic participate; 98 percent of the 75 leaders note positive changes in leadership skill and accountabilities; Regional Community of Practice for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), and another one with Religious Leaders, established. Within three months, more than half of all individual CCM goals (56%) set during the programme are achieved—a record!

Knowing and using the techniques and tools for creating transformational spaces within routine action, shifting processes and the way business is done or transacted is imperative for large-scale change. These opportunities present themselves regularly and frequently in every organisation and sector, in all human endeavors, and remain largely unutilized. The pace of transformational results would accelerate exponentially if we could harness the transformative potential of the numerous routine activities.

Speak out and speak up.

Josselyne and Chaske speak up for the water rights of people in South Dakota. In less than a day, they produced a Public Service Announcement (PSA) enlisting the assistance of Chaske’s celebrity friends to raise awareness and support for those who have been without power and water for weeks. The PSA urged individuals to ‘shift the power to the people’ and to empower everyone to create sustainable, lasting change in their communities and countries. In less than a month, over 13,000 letters were sent to Congress as a result of the viral PSA campaign. Josselyne and Chaske say the Cheyenne River Sioux Water Infrastructure project is a launching pad to empower people to create sustainable, lasting change in their communities and countries through awareness of the current issues and conditions; awareness of alternatives that promote dignity, justice, unity and accountability; and through taking action that supports the creation of these alternatives. Jordan speaks out against violence in rough and dangerous situations—in the streets, in schools, and with gangs. He develops skills in young men, fostering leadership and integrity. He says he works to develop young men of respect, walking in character, and living their purpose and identity as leaders among their peers.

These transformational leaders have the courage to speak up for actions that result in sustainable and equitable change and to



(left to right) Michael and Kobi develop Occupy Manifesto, a programme for social transformation; Journalists making the invisible, visible

speak against those that do not. They are not reactive. They speak from a creative space that is sourced from a place of valuing diversity, equity, interdependence and dignity. They say, “It is not okay with me, and I will no longer contribute to it by my silence.” It is a burning for justice for all beings, a burning sourced in deep wisdom, in that non-dual self of being it all—of being humanity.

5. SHARE LEADERSHIP: LEAD WHILE FOSTERING LEADERSHIP IN OTHERS

Be a leader while actively supporting others to lead.

Kobi and Michael are leading a unique results-oriented learning-in-action programme designed to ground, guide and empower OWS change agents so that they can achieve systemic-level change and help bring the world into a new paradigm of sustainability, integrity and justice. They think of themselves as shared leaders, where there is no hierarchy. When people outside the OWS movement come to speak to ‘their leader,’ Kobi responds that each one is a leader, so you could speak to me or anyone else! They say shared-leadership, direct democracy and acknowledgment of all voices are some of the key underlying core values of Occupy. These values make up the heart from which this new world is being born. They challenge us to step up and engage the deepest part of ourselves if we are going to successfully navigate this change together. We are each being called to become our most authentic selves, and to allow our actions and words to be guided by our authentic core.

Michael and Kobi say, “The success of our movement rests on the shoulders of all those who are involved in the work of sustaining it and moving it forward. We are essentially the midwives of the new world. To accept this responsibility requires that we step into a substantially new manner of thinking and acting. We must become the true servant leaders of the new world, holding our core selves in highest regard while genuinely and intelligently giving our full selves to the good of the whole, and actively choosing to do all we can to better the world.”

Being a leader while actively supporting others to lead is an emerging concept. This is not about simply switching roles; it is a way of being and leading. The shared leaders do not work in conventional multidisciplinary teams. They bring everyone’s talents to the table, with processes to assure that everyone is heard and that decisions are not made by ‘the few leaders.’ They do not

view themselves as stars of the show, rather as servers of humanity. They are riding the wave of change with wise principles and modalities. I am left with a profound question for myself and others who are not OWS change agents. What can we do, to proactively support this amazing spirit, to make what needs to happen, happen and play our part?

Seek out potential leaders and create opportunities for their manifestation, while leading.

Cedrita and Shannon recognize that today’s youth, especially young women, are extremely vulnerable to and constantly bombarded by messages that dictate who they should be and what defines true womanhood. Messages tell them what to wear, how to style their hair, how to parent, what profession to choose, what is sexy and cool and how to obtain ideal relationships. The residual effects of the crack epidemic, the influences of a pop culture that encourages material gain ‘by any means necessary,’ led to significant negative consequences. With this in mind, they encourage young women 14-18 years of age to explore their gifts and talents, develop self-esteem and the skills necessary to assume their position as the future leaders in their jobs, in their schools, and in society at large.

Simultaneously, Cedrita and Shannon lead change in their workplace, building vibrant results-oriented teams. They enhance their leadership and stretch themselves to do what they are promoting with young leaders. Several people in transformational work say, “I want to empower others to make a difference.” In my view, in addition to empowering others, personal commitment to results—and it is immaterial in what social issue or topic—makes a huge impact. It makes us stretch and grow beyond our grasp. This creates a new field with the resonance and synergy necessary for large-scale change.

Enable change by bolstering others’ capabilities through active support in the public domain.

We are in Ukraine, working with disc jockeys from discotheques where sharing needles and intravenous drug use leads to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Results: first ever care and services established for those dying; twenty thousand people gather for a concert organized by four youths. For the first time, a young man gets up to declare he is HIV positive. Others follow. DJs in the transformative leadership programme decide to stop using intravenous drugs themselves and also in their dance clubs.



Renowned Southern African Musicians and Painters create new narratives; Cambodians shatter damaging beliefs through radio talk show



We are in Cambodia. A group of individuals in a town creates a radio talk show in which movie stars speak about issues related to HIV/AIDS and listeners call in with questions. They are answered by the Secretary-General of the National AIDS Authority. The show receives hundreds of calls, signaling a new willingness among Cambodians to speak about HIV/AIDS, not only in their own homes but also in public forums. Leaders who are willing to take risks to challenge norms that have guided individual and collective behavior get to the root of issues such as gender, power, stigma, traditional practices and other factors that fuel perceptions and actions that impact negatively on people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs). Damaging beliefs are shattered. Result: PLWHAs can worship in temples alongside other villagers and no longer have to leave their villages.

We create the new emergent narrative by supporting each other in the public domain and actively choosing to stand in solidarity, knowing we are pushing the envelope on the edge of the unknown.

6. LEADERSHIP INSIDE-OUT: COMPASSIONATE COURAGE

The most urgent and sustainable response to the world's problems and the ability to harness new opportunities lies in our capacity to expand solutions for problems that are driven solely by technology, to responses that also create new patterns and systems generated from our wisdom.

Leaders in this era of global abundance and seeming scarcity need to understand and challenge the factors that allow the massive divide between the rich and the poor to persist. In a world of interconnected threats and challenges, many different competencies are required. We will only have impact if we break with business-as-usual and dramatically accelerate and scale-up action in this interdependent world.

What's missing today that could make a significant difference tomorrow? Are you willing to fill the gap? We ask you, the reader, to reflect on the following questions:

- Do I see myself as a courageous, compassionate contributor for alleviating suffering and creating a thriving and just planet? Who am I being, how am I thinking and what am I doing?
- Do I value my inner capacity and wisdom? Do I consider myself to be a critical strategic thinker? Do I have what it takes to deliver on my word and actions? Am I willing to cultivate these aspects in myself?

- Am I willing to invest in learning new architectural skills and competencies for transforming the aching world? After all, a system delivers what it is designed to deliver! Am I willing to 'see' the invisible patterns that keep one in three human beings in dire life-and-death circumstances? Have I decided it is enough and I will put myself out there to create new systems?

- Am I willing to be the emerging 'shared-leader'? How and when will I reflect deeply and inquire into my relationship with external power and money?

- Will I actively choose to do all I can to better the world? Will I commit, not only as intention, but also in action?

- Am I willing to let go of my way of doing things, even if I am considered to be successful or an expert—to renew myself through the emergence of new patterns and methods in work and life?

- Will I support those who are taking the risks and speak in the public domain to bolster their work? Or am I afraid? What am I afraid of losing—Reputation? Face? Expert Status? Money? Social Approval?

The persistence of poverty and the lack of opportunity to live and thrive for so many is a measure of our response to date. Our sense of scarcity, no matter how much we have; our definition of 'success' where the proxy is basically money or 'wealth' without any sense of sufficiency; our rhetoric of partnership in the midst of systems set up for competition precludes creative responses.

Our future depends on the choices we make. Will we continue doing the same things again and again, hoping to reverse the situation, or will we choose to generate a different reality?

Monica Sharma, M.D., trained as a physician and epidemiologist, then worked for the United Nations for 22 years as a Director of several global programmes. An international expert and practitioner on leadership development for sustainable and equitable change, she now works with United Nations, universities, management institutions, governments, business, media and civil society organizations worldwide. She is also the Tata Chair Professor at the renowned Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai. Monica Sharma designed a unique response model based on extensive application—a conscious full-spectrum model—which simultaneously solves problems, shifts systems and creates new patterns sourced from individual inner capacity and transformational leadership. (see *Kosmos*, Fall/Winter 2007) This model has generated sustainable results worldwide. She fosters leaders from around the world, enabling them to manifest their full potential, resulting in equitable and sustainable change.

